

T H E
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O F
W I L L . S H E N S T O N E .

I N T H R E E V O L U M E S .

W I T H T H E L I F E O F T H E A U T H O R ,
A N D A D E S C R I P T I O N O F T H E L E A S O W E S .

Yet while he woo'd the gentle throng,
With liquid lay and melting song,
The list'ning herd around him stray'd,
In wanton frisk the lambkins play'd,
And every Naiad ceas'd to lave
Her azure limbs amid the wave :
The Graces danc'd ; the rosy band
Of Smiles and Loves went hand in hand,
And purple Pleasures strew'd the way
With sweetest flow'rs ; and every ray
Of each fond Muse with rapture fir'd,
To glowing thoughts his breast inspir'd ;
The hills rejoic'd, the vallies rung,
All Nature smil'd while SHENSTONE sung.

V E R S E S by — .

V O L . I .

L O N D O N :

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M D C C L X I X .

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P R E F A C E.

A Great part of the Poetical Works of Mr. Shenstone, particularly his Elegies and Pastorals, are (as he himself expresses it) "The exact transcripts of the situation of his own mind," and abound in frequent allusions to his own place, the beautiful scene of his retirement from the world. Exclusively, therefore, of our natural curiosity to be acquainted with the history of an author whose Works we peruse with pleasure, some short account of Mr. Shenstone's personal character, and situation in life, may not only be agreeable, but absolutely necessary, to the reader, as it is impossible he should enter into the true spirit of his writings if he is entirely ignorant of those circumstances of his life, which sometimes so greatly influenced his reflections.

I could wish, however, that this task had been allotted to some person capable of performing it in that masterly manner which the subject so well deserves. To confess the truth, it was chiefly to prevent his Remains from falling into the hands of any one still less qualified to do him justice, that I have unwillingly ventured to undertake the publication of them myself.

Mr. Shenstone was the eldest son of a plain uneducated gentleman in Shropshire, who farmed his own estate. The father, sensible of his son's extraordinary capacity, resolved to give him a learned education, and sent him a commoner to Pembroke College in Oxford, designing him for the church; but though he had the most awful notions of the wisdom, power, and goodness, of God, he never could be persuaded to enter into orders. In his private opinion he adhered to no particular sect, and hated all religious disputes.

But whatever were his own sentiments, he always shewed great tenderness to those who differed from him. Tenderness, indeed, in every sense of the word, was his peculiar characteristic; his friends, his domestics, his poor neighbours, all daily experienced his benevolent turn of mind. Indeed this virtue in him was often carried to such excess, that it sometimes bordered upon weakness; yet if he was convinced that any of those ranked amongst the number of his friends had treated him ungenerously, he was not easily reconciled. He used a maxim, however, on such occasions, which is worthy of being observed and imitated; "I never," said he, "will be a revengeful enemy; but I cannot, it is not in my nature, to be half a friend." He was in his temper quite unsuspicious, but if suspicion was once awakened in him, it was not laid asleep again without difficulty.

He was no economist; the generosity of his temper prevented him from paying a proper regard to the use of money: he exceeded, therefore, the bounds of his paternal fortune, which before he died was considerably incumbered. But when one recollects the perfect paradise he had raised around him, the hospitality with which he lived, his great indulgence to his servants, his charities to the indigent, and all done with an estate not more than three hundred pounds a-year, one should rather be led to wonder that he left any thing behind him, than to blame his want of economy. He left, however, more than sufficient to pay all his debts, and by his will appropriated his whole estate for that purpose.

It was perhaps from some considerations on the narrowness of his fortune that he forbore to marry, for he was no enemy to wedlock, had a high opinion of many among the fair sex, was fond of their society, and no stranger to the ten-

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derest impressions. One, which he received in his youth, was with difficulty surmounted. The lady was the subject of that sweet pastoral, in four parts, which has been so universally admired; and which, one would have thought, must have subdued the loftiest heart, and softened the most obdurate.

His person, as to height, was above the middle stature, but largely and rather inelegantly formed: his face seemed plain till you conversed with him, and then it grew very pleasing. In his dress he was negligent even to a fault, though, when young, at the university, he was accounted a beau. He wore his own hair, which was quite gray very early, in a particular manner; not from any affectation of singularity, but from a maxim he had laid down, that without too slavish a regard to fashion, every one should dress in a manner most suitable to his own person and figure. In short, his faults were only little blemishes, thrown in by Nature, as it were on purpose, to prevent him from rising too much above that level of imperfection allotted to humanity.

His character, as a writer, will be distinguished by simplicity with elegance, and genius with correctness. He had a sublimity equal to the highest attempts; yet, from the indolence of his temper, he chose rather to amuse himself in culling flowers at the foot of the mount, than to take the trouble of climbing the more arduous steep of Parnassus: but whenever he was disposed to rise, his steps, though natural, were noble, and always well supported. In the tenderness of Elegiac poetry he hath not been excelled; in the simplicity of Pastoral, one may venture to say he had very few equals. Of great sensibility himself, he never failed to engage the hearts of his readers; and amidst the nicest attention to the harmony of

his numbers, he always took care to express, with propriety, the sentiments of an elegant mind. In all his writings his greatest difficulty was to please himself. I remember a passage in one of his Letters, where, speaking of his Love Songs, he says,—"Some were written on occasions a good deal imaginary, others not so; and the reason there are so many is, that I wanted to write one good song, and could never please myself." It was this diffidence which occasioned him to throw aside many of his pieces before he had bestowed upon them his last touches. I have suppressed several on this account; and if, among those which I have selected, there should be discovered some little want of his finishing polish, I hope it will be attributed to this cause, and, of course, be excused: yet I flatter myself there will always appear something well worthy of having been preserved: and though I was afraid of inserting what might injure the character of my friend, yet, as the sketches of a great master are always valuable, I was unwilling the public should lose any thing material of so accomplished a writer. In this dilemma it will easily be conceived that the task I had to perform would become somewhat difficult; how I have acquitted myself the public must judge. Nothing, however, except what he had already published, has been admitted without the advice of his most judicious friends; nothing altered without their particular concurrence. It is impossible to please every one; but 'tis hoped that no reader will be so unreasonable as to imagine that the Author wrote solely for his amusement; his talents were various; and though it may perhaps be allowed that his excellence chiefly appeared in subjects of tenderness and simplicity, yet he frequently condescended to trifle with those of

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humour and drollery: these, indeed, he himself in some measure degraded, by the title which he gave them of Levities; but had they been entirely rejected, the public would have been deprived of some *jeux d'esprits*, excellent in their kind, and Mr. Shenstone's character as a writer would have been but imperfectly exhibited.

But the talents of Mr. Shenstone were not confined merely to poetry; his character, as a man of clear judgment and deep penetration, will best appear from his Prose Works; it is there we must search for the acuteness of his understanding, and his profound knowledge of the human heart. It is to be lamented, indeed, that some things here are unfinished, and can be regarded only as fragments: many are left as single thoughts, but which, like the sparks of diamonds, shew the richness of the mind to which they belong, or, like the foot of a Hercules, discover the uncommon strength and extraordinary dimensions of that hero. I have no apprehension of incurring blame from any one for preserving these valuable Remains; they will discover to every reader the Authors sentiments on several important subjects; and there can be very few to whom they will not impart many thoughts which they would never perhaps have been able to draw from the source of their own reflections.

But I believe little need be said to recommend the writings of this gentleman to public attention. His character is already sufficiently established; and if he be not injured by the inability of his editor, there is no doubt but he will ever maintain an eminent station among the best of our English writers.

A PREFATORY ESSAY ON ELEGY.

IT is observable that discourses prefixed to poetry are contrived very frequently to inculcate such tenets as may exhibit the performance to the greatest advantage: the fabric is very commonly raised in the first place, and the measures by which we are to judge of its merit are afterwards adjusted.

There have been few rules given us by the critics concerning the structure of Elegiac poetry; and far be it from the author of the following trifles to dignify his own opinions with that denomination: he would only intimate the great variety of subjects, and the different styles* in which the writers of Elegy have hitherto indulged themselves, and endeavour to shield the following ones by the latitude of their example.

If we consider the etymology of the word†, the epithet which Horace gives it‡, or the confession which Ovid makes concerning it§, I think we may conclude thus much however, that Elegy, in its true and genuine acceptation, includes a tender and querulous idea; that it looks upon this as its peculiar characteristic, and so long as this is thoroughly sustained, admits of a variety of subjects, which by its manner of treating them it renders its own: it throws its melancholy stole over pretty different objects, which, like the dresses at a funeral procession, gives them all a kind of solemn and uniform appearance.

* This essay was written near twenty years ago.

† Ε-ΛΕΓΕΙΝ, Ε-particulam dolendi.

‡ Miserabiles elegos.

Hor.

§ Heu nimis ex vero nunc tibi nomen erit.

Ovid.. de Morte Tibulli.

A PREFATORY ESSAY ON ELEGY. II

It is probable that Elegies were written, at first, upon the death of intimate friends and near relations; celebrated beauties, or favourite mistresses; beneficent governors and illustrious men: one may add, perhaps, of all those who are placed by Virgil in the laurel grove of his Elysium, (*Vide Hurd's Dissertation on Horace's Epistle*)

Quique sui memores alios fecere merendo.

After these subjects were sufficiently exhausted, and the severity of fate displayed in the most affecting instances, the poets sought occasion to vary their complaints, and the next tender species of sorrow that presented itself was the grief of absent or neglected lovers; and this indulgence might be indeed allowed them, but with this they were not contented: they had obtained a small corner in the province of love, and they took advantage, from thence, to overturn the whole territory: they sung its spoils, triumphs, ovations, and rejoicings*, as well as the captivity and exequies that attended it: they gave the name of Elegy to their pleasantries as well as lamentations, till at last, through their abundant fondness for the myrtle, they forgot that the cypress was their peculiar garland.

In this it is probable they deviated from the original design of Elegy, and it should seem that any kind of subjects, treated in such a manner as to diffuse a pleasant melancholy, might far better deserve the name than the facetious mirth and libertine festivity of the successful votaries of Love.

But not to dwell too long upon an opinion which may seem, perhaps, introduced to favour the following performance, it may not be impro-

* *Dicite Iö Pæan, et Iö bis dicite Pæan. Ovid.*

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proper to examine into the use and end of Elegy. The most important end of all poetry is to encourage virtue. Epic and tragedy chiefly recommended the public virtues; Elegy is of a species which illustrates and endears the private. There is a truly virtuous pleasure connected with many pensive contemplations, which it is the province and excellency of Elegy to enforce: this, by presenting suitable ideas, has discovered sweets in melancholy which we could not find in mirth, and has led us, with success, to the dusky urn, when we could draw no pleasure from the sparkling bowl. As pastoral conveys an idea of simplicity and innocence, it is in particular the task and merit of Elegy to shew the innocence and simplicity of rural life to advantage; and that in a way distinct from Pastoral, as much as the plain but judicious landlord may be imagined to surpass his tenant both in dignity and understanding. It should also tend to elevate the more tranquil virtues of humility, disinterestedness, simplicity, and innocence: but then there is a degree of elegance and refinement no way inconsistent with these rural virtues, and that raises Elegy above that *merum rus*, that unpolished rusticity, which has given our ^tPastoral writers their highest reputation.

Wealth and splendor will never want their proper weight; the danger is lest they should too much preponderate: a kind of poetry, therefore, which throws its chief influence into the other scale, that magnifies the sweets of liberty and independence, that endears the honest delights of love and friendship, that celebrates the glory of a good name after death, that ridicules the futile arrogance of birth, that recommends the innocent amusement of letters, and insensibly prepares the

A PREFATORY ESSAY ON ELEGY. 13

mind for that humanity it inculcates; such a kind of poetry may chance to please, and if it please, should seem to be of service.

As to the style of Elegy, it may be well enough determined from what has gone before: it should imitate the voice and language of grief, or, if a metaphor of dress be more agreeable, it should be simple and diffuse, and flowing as a mourner's veil. A versification, therefore, is desirable, which by indulging a free and unconstrained expression, may admit of that simplicity which Elegy requires.

Heroic metre, with alternate rhyme, seems well enough adapted to this species of poetry; and, however exceptionable upon other occasions, its inconveniencies appear to lose their weight in shorter Elegies, and its advantages seem to acquire an additional importance. The world has an admirable example of its beauty in a collection of Elegies* not long since published, the product of a gentleman of the most exact taste, and whose untimely death merits all the tears that Elegy can shed.

It is not impossible that some may think this metre too lax and prosaic; others, that even a more dissolute variety of numbers may have superior advantages: and in favour of these last might be produced the example of Milton in his *Lycidas*, together with one or two recent and beautiful imitations of his versification in that monody. But this kind of argument I am apt to think, must prove too much, since the writers I have in view seem capable enough of recommending any metre they should chuse; though it must

* N. B. This preface was written near twenty years ago.

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be owned also, that the choice they make of any is at the same time the strongest presumption in its favour.

Perhaps it may be no great difficulty to compromise the dispute. There is no one kind of metre that is distinguished by rhymes but is liable to some objection or other. Heroic verse, where every second line is terminated by a rhyme, (with which the judgment requires that the sense should in some measure also terminate) is apt to render the expression either scanty or constrained; and this is sometimes observable in the writings of a poet lately deceased, though I believe no one ever threw so much sense together, with so much ease, into a couplet, as Mr. Pope: but as an air of constraint too often accompanies this metre, it seems by no means proper for a writer of Elegy.

The previous rhyme in Milton's *Lycidas* is very frequently placed at such a distance from the following, that it is often dropt by the memory (much better employed in attending to the sentiment) before it be brought to join its partner; and this seems to be the greatest objection to that kind of versification: but then the peculiar ease and variety it admits of are, no doubt, sufficient to over-balance the objection, and to give it the preference to any other, in an Elegy of length.

The chief exception, to which stanza of all kinds is liable, is, that it breaks the sense too regularly when it is continued through a long poem; and this may be, perhaps, the fault of Mr Waller's excellent panegyric. But if this fault be less discernable in smaller compositions, as I suppose it is, I flatter myself that the advantages I have before mentioned, resulting from alternate rhyme, (with which stanza is, I think, connected) may

at least, in shorter Elegies, be allowed to outweigh its imperfections.

I shall say but little of the different kinds of Elegy. The melancholy of a lover is different, no doubt, from what we feel on other mixed occasions. The mind in which love and grief at once predominate is softened to an excess. Love-elegy, therefore, is more negligent of order and design, and, being addressed chiefly to the ladies, requires little more than tenderness and perspicuity. Elegies that are formed upon promiscuous incidents, and addressed to the world in general, inculcate some sort of moral, and admit a different degree of reasoning, thought, and order.

The Author of the following Elegies entered on his subjects occasionally, as particular incidents in life suggested, or dispositions of mind recommended them to his choice. If he describes a rural landscape, or unfolds the train of sentiments it inspired, he fairly drew his picture from the spot, and felt very sensibly the affection he communicates: if he speaks of his humble shed, his flocks and his fleeces, he does not counterfeit the scene, who having (whether thro' choice or necessity is not material) retired betimes to country solitudes, and sought his happiness in rural employments, has a right to consider himself as a real shepherd. The flocks, the meadows, and the grottoes, are his own, and the embellishment of his farm his sole amusement. As the sentiments, therefore, were inspired by Nature, and that in the earlier part of his life, he hopes they will retain a natural appearance, diffusing at least some part of that amusement which, he freely acknowledges, he received from the composition of them.

There will appear, perhaps, a real inconsistency in the moral tenour of the several Elegies, and the

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subsequent ones may sometimes seem a recantation of the preceding. The reader will scarcely impute this to oversight, but will allow that men's opinions, as well as tempers, vary; that neither public nor private, active nor speculative, life, are unexceptionably happy, and, consequently, that any change of opinion concerning them may afford an additional beauty to poetry, as it gives us a more striking representation of life,

If the author has hazarded, throughout, the use of English or modern allusions, he hopes it will not be imputed to an entire ignorance, or to the least disesteem of the ancient learning. He has kept the ancient plan and method in his eye, though he builds his edifice with the materials of his own nation. In other words, through a fondness for his native country, he has made use of the flowers it produced, tho', in order to exhibit them to the greater advantage, he has endeavoured to wave his garland by the best model he could find; with what success, beyond his own amusement, must be left to judges less partial to him than either his acquaintance or his friends.—If any of those should be so candid as to approve the variety of subjects he has chosen, and the tenderness of sentiment he has endeavoured to impress, he begs the metre also may not be too suddenly condemned. The public ear, habituated of late to a quicker measure, may perhaps consider this as heavy and languid; but an objection of that kind may gradually lose its force, if this measure should be allowed to suit the nature of Elegy.

If it should happen to be considered as an objection with others, that there is too much of a moral cast diffused through the whole, it is replied, that he endeavoured to animate the poetry so far as not to render this objection too obvious, or to risk

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excluding the fashionable reader ; at the same time never deviating from a fixed principle, that poetry without morality is but the blossom of a fruit-tree. Poetry is, indeed, like that species of plants which may bear at once both fruits and blossoms, and the tree is by no means in perfection without the former, however it may be embellished by the flowers which surround it.

A DESCRIPTION
OF THE LEASOWES*.

THE SEAT OF THE LATE

WILLIAM SHENSTONE, ESQ.

BY R. DODSLEY.

THE Leasowes is situated in the parish of Hales Owen, a small market-town in the county of Salop, but surrounded by other counties, and thirty miles from Shrewsbury, as it is near ten to the borders of Shropshire. Though a paternal estate, it was never distinguished for any peculiar beauties, till the time of its late owner. It was reserved for a person of his ingenuity both to discover and improve them, which he has done so effectually, that it is now considered as amongst the principal of those delightful scenes which persons of taste, in the present age, are desirous to see. Far from violating its natural beauties, Mr. Shenstone's only study was to give them their full effect;

* The following Description was intended to give a friend some idea of the Leasowes—which having been so justly admired by persons of the best taste, and celebrated by the Muse of such an original genius as Mr. Shenstone, it is hoped the Public will not be displeased with this slight attempt to perpetuate those beauties, which time, or the different taste of some future possessor, may destroy.

and although the form in which things now appear be indeed the consequence of much thought and labour, yet the hand of Art is no way visible either in the shape of ground, the disposition of trees, or (which are here so numerous and striking) the romantic fall of his cascades.

But I will now proceed to a more particular description. About half a mile short of Hales Owen, in your way from Birmingham to Bewdley, you quit the great road, and turn into a green lane on the left hand, where, descending in a winding manner to the bottom of a deep valley finely shaded, the first object that occurs is a kind of ruined wall, and a small gate, within an arch, inscribed, "The Priory Gate." Here, it seems, the company should properly begin their walk, but generally chuse to go up with their horses or equipage to the house, from whence returning, they descend back into the valley. Passing through a small gate at the bottom of the fine swelling lawn that surrounds the house, you enter upon a winding path, with a piece of water on your right. The path and water, overshadowed with trees that grow upon the slopes of this narrow dingle, render the scene at once cool, gloomy, solemn, and sequestered, and form so striking a contrast to the lively scene you have just left, that you seem all on a sudden landed in a subterraneous kind of region. Winding forward down the valley, you pass beside a small root-house, where, on a tablet, are these lines :

" Here in cool grot and mossy cell,
We rural Fays and Faeries dwell ;
Tho' rarely seen by mortal eye,
When the pale moon, ascending high,
Darts thro' yon' limes her quiv'ring beams,
We frisk it near these crystal streams.

“ Her beams, reflected from the wave,
Afford the light our revels crave;
The turf, with daisies broider'd o'er,
Exceeds, we wor, the Parian floor;
Nor yet for artful strains we call,
But listen to the water's fall.

“ Would you then taste our tranquil scene,
Be sure your bosoms be serene,
Devoid of hate, devoid of strife,
Devoid of all that poisons life;
And much it 'vails you in their place
To graft the love of human race.

“ And tread with awe these favour'd bowers,
Nor wound the shrubs, nor bruise the flowers;
So may your path with sweets abound,
So may your couch with rest be crown'd!
But harm betide the wayward swain
Who dares our hallow'd haunts profane!”

These sentiments correspond as well as possible with the ideas we form of the abode of Fairies, and, appearing deep in this romantic valley, serve to keep alive such enthusiastic images, while this sort of scene continues.

You now pass through The Priory Gate before mentioned, and are admitted into a part of the valley somewhat different from the former, tall trees, high irregular ground, and rugged scars. The right presents you with, perhaps, the most natural, if not the most striking, of the many cascades here found; the left with a sloping grove of oaks; and the centre with a pretty circular landscape appearing through the trees, of which Hales Owen steeple, and other objects at a distance, form an interesting part. The seat beneath the ruined wall has these lines

of Virgil inscribed, suiting well with the general tenour of Mr. Shenstone's late situation :

—— “ *Lucis habitamus opacis,
Riparumque toros et prata recentia rivis
Incolimus.*”

IMITATION.

—— We dwell in shady groves,
And seek the groves with cooling streams
 refresh'd,
And trace the verdant banks. *Hull.*

You now proceed a few paces down the valley to another bench, where you have this cascade in front, which, together with the internal arch and other appendages, make a pretty irregular picture. I must observe, once for all, that a number of these protempore benches (two stumps with a transverse board) seem chiefly intended as hints to spectators, lest in passing cursorily through the farm, they might suffer any of that immense variety the place furnishes to escape their notice. The stream attending us, with its agreeable murmurs, as we descend along this pleasant valley, we come next to a small feat, where we have a sloping grove upon the right, and on the left a striking vista to the steeple of Hales Owen, which is here seen in a new light. We now descend farther down this shady and sequestered valley, accompanied on the right by the same brawling rivulet running over pebbles, till it empties itself into a fine piece of water at the bottom. The path here winding to the left conforms to the water beforementioned, running round the foot of a small hill, and accompanying this semi-circular lake into another winding valley, somewhat more open, and not less pleasing, than the

22 DESCRIPTION OF THE LEASOWES..

former : however, before we enter this, it will be proper to mention a seat about the center of this water-scene, where the ends of it are lost in the two vallies on each side, and in front it is invisibly connected with another piece of water, of about twenty acres, open to Mr. Shenstone, but not his property. This last was a performance of the monks, and part of a prodigious chain of fish-ponds that belonged to Hales abbey. The back ground of this scene is very beautiful, and exhibits a picture of villages and varied ground finely held up to the eye.

I speak of all this as already finished, but through some misfortune in the mound that pounds up the water it is not completed.

We now leave The Priory upon the left, which is not meant for an object here, and wind along into the other valley : and here I cannot but take notice of the judgment which formed this piece of water ; for although it be not very large, yet, as it is formed by the concurrence of three vallies, in which two of the ends are hid, and in the third it seems to join with the large extent of water below, it is, to all appearance, unbounded. I must confess I never saw a more natural bed for water, or any kind of lake that pleased me better ; but it may be right to mention, that this water, in its full extent, has a yet more important effect from Mr. Shenstone's house, where it is seen to a great advantage. We now, by a pleasing serpentine walk, enter a narrow glade in the valley, the slopes on each side finely covered with oaks and beeches, on the left of which is a common bench, which affords a retiring place secluded from every eye, and a short respite, during which the eye reposes on a fine amphitheatre of wood and thicket.

DESCRIPTION OF THE LEASOWES. 23

We now proceed to a seat beneath a prodigiously fine canopy of spreading oak, on the back of which is this inscription :

“ Huc ades, O Melibœe ! caper tibi salvus et hædi ;

Et si quid cessare potes, requiesce sub umbra.”

IMITATION.

Hither, O Melibœus ! bend thy way ;
Thy herds, thy goats, secure from harm, repose ;
If happy leisure serve a while to stay,
Here rest thy limbs beneath these shady boughs.
Hull.

The picture before it, is that of a beautiful home-scene ; a small lawn of well-varied ground, encompassed with hills and well-grown oaks, and embellished with a cast of the piping Faunus amid trees and shrubs on a slope upon the left, and on the right, and nearer the eye, with an urn thus inscribed :

“ Ingenio et amicitia
Gulielmi Somerville.”

And on the opposite side,

“ G. S. posuit,
Debitâ spargens lacrimâ favillam
Vatis amici.”

TRANSLATION.

To the genius and friendship
of

WILLIAM SOMERVILLE,

By W. S.

Sprinkling the ashes of a friendly bard
With tributary tears. *Hull.*

The scene is enclosed on all sides by trees ; in the middle only there is an opening, where the lawn is continued, and winds out of sight.

Here entering a gate, you are led through a thicket of many sorts of willows, into a large root-house, inscribed to the Right Honorable the Earl of Stamford. It seems that worthy peer was present at the first opening of the cascade, which is the principal object from the root-house, where the eye is presented with a fairy vision, consisting of an irregular and romantic fall of water, very unusual, one hundred and fifty yards in continuity; and a very striking scene it affords. Other cascades may possibly have the advantage of a greater descent and a larger torrent; but a more wild and romantic appearance of water, and at the same time strictly natural, is what I never saw in any place whatever. This scene, tho' comparatively small, is yet aggrandized with so much art, that we forget the quantity of water which flows through this close and overshaded valley, and are so much transported with the intricacy of scene, and the concealed height from whence it flows, that we, without reflection, add the idea of magnificence to that of beauty. In short, it is not but upon reflection that we find the stream is not a Niagara, but rather a water-fall in miniature; and that the same artifice, upon a larger scale, were there large trees instead of small ones, and a river instead of a rill, would be capable of forming a scene that would exceed the utmost of our ideas. But I will not dwell longer upon this inimitable scene; those who would admire it properly, must view it, as surely as those that view it must admire it beyond almost any thing they ever saw.

Proceeding on the right-hand path, the next seat affords a scene of what Mr. Shenstone used to call his Forest ground, consisting of wild green slopes peeping through dingle, or irregular groupes of trees, a confused mixture of savage and cultivated

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The scene is enclosed on all sides by trees; in the only there is an opening where the sun shines, and winds out.

DESCRIPTION OF THE LEASOWES. 25

Ground, held up to the eye, and forming a landscape fit for the pencil of Salvator Rosa.

Winding on beside this lawn, which is over-arched with spreading trees, the eye catches, at intervals, over an intermediate hill, the spire of Hales church, forming here a perfect obelisk—the urn to Mr. Somerville, &c.; and now passing through a kind of thicket, we arrive at a natural bower of almost circular oaks, inscribed in the manner following:

“ To Mr. DODSLEY.

Come then, my Friend! thy sylvan taste
display :

Come hear thy Faunus tune his rustic lay :

Ah ! rather come, and in these dells disown
The care of other strains, and tune thine own.”

On the bank above it, amid the fore-mentioned shrubs, is a statue of the piping Faun, which not only embellishes this scene, but is also seen from the court before the house, and from other places: it is surrounded by venerable oaks, and very happily situated. From this bower also you look down upon the fore-mentioned irregular ground, shut up with trees on all sides, except some few openings to the more pleasing parts of this grotesque and hilly country. The next little bench affords the first, but not most striking, view of the Priory. It is indeed a small building, but seen as it is beneath trees, and its extremity also hid by the same, it has in some sort the dignity and solemn appearance of a larger edifice.

Passing through a gate, we enter a small open grove, where the first seat we find affords a picturesque view, through trees, of a clump of oaks at a distance, over-shadowing a little cottage upon a green hill: we thence immediately enter a per-

26 DESCRIPTION OF THE LEASOWES.

fect dome or circular temple of magnificent beeches, in the centre of which it was intended to place an antique altar, or a statue of Pan. The path serpentizing through this open grove, leads us by an easy ascent to a small bench with this motto,

-----“ Me gelidum nemus
 “ Nympharumque leves cum satyris chori
 “ Secernant populo.” Hor.

E X P L A N A T I O N.

———— May the cool grove,
 And gay assembled nymphs with sylvans mix'd,
 Conceal me from the world ! Hull.

which alludes to the retired situation of the grove. There is also seen, through an opening to the left, a pleasing landscape of a distant hill, with a whited farm house upon the summit ; and to the right hand a beautiful round slope, crowned with a clump of large firs, with a pyramidal seat on its centre, to which, after no long walk, the path conduct us.

But we first come to another view of The Priory, more advantageous, and at a better distance, to which the eye is led down a green slope, through a scenery of tall oaks, in a most agreeable manner, the grove we have just passed on one side, and a hill of trees and thicket on the other, conducting the eye to a narrow opening through which it appears.

We now ascend to a small bench, where the circumjacent country begins to open ; in particular a glass-house appears between two large clumps of trees, at about the distance of four miles ; the glass-houses in this country not ill resembling a distant pyramid. Ascending to the next seat, which is in the Gothic form, the scene grows more and

more extended ; woods and lawns, hills and valleys, thicket and plain, agreeably intermingled. On the back of this seat is the following inscription, which the Author told me that he chose to fix here, to supply what he thought some want of life in this part of the farm, and to keep up the spectator's attention till he came to scale the hill beyond.

I N S C R I P T I O N.

' Shepherd, wouldst thou here obtain
' Pleasure unalloy'd with pain,
' Joy that suits the rural sphere ?
' Gentle Shepherd ! lend an ear.

' Learn to relish calm delight,
' Verdant vales and fountains bright,
' Trees that nod on sloping hills,
' Caves that echo, tinkling rills.

' If thou canst no charm disclose
' In the simplest bud that blows,
' Go, forsake thy plain and fold,
' Join the crowd, and toil for gold.

' Tranquil pleasures never cloy ;
' Banish each tumultuous joy ;
' All but love—for love inspires
' Fonder wishes, warmer fires.

' Love and all its joys be thine—
' Yet ere thou the reins resign,
' Hear what Reason seems to say,
' Hear attentive, and obey.

" Crimson leaves the rose adorn,
" But beneath them lurks a thorn ;
" Fair and flow'ry is the brake,
" Yet it hides the 'vengeful snake.

28. DESCRIPTION OF THE LEASOWES.

" Think not she, whose empty pride
 " Dares the fleecy garb deride,
 " Think not she who, light and vain,
 " Scorns the sheep can love the swain.

" Artless deed and simple dress
 " Mark the chosen shepherdess;
 " Thoughts by decency controll'd,
 " Well conceiv'd, and freely told:

" Sense that shuns each conscious air,
 " Wit that falls ere well aware;
 " Generous pity prone to sigh
 " If her kid or lambkin die.

" Let not lucre, let not pride,
 " Draw thee from such charms aside;
 " Have not those their proper sphere?
 " Gentler passions triumph here.

" See! to sweeten thy repose,
 " The blossom buds, the fountain flows;
 " Lo! to crown thy healthful board,
 " All that milk and fruits afford.

" Seek no more—the rest is vain;
 " Pleasure ending soon in pain;
 " Anguish lightly gilded o'er;
 " Close thy wish, and seek no more."

And now, passing through a wicket, the path winds up the back part of a circular green hill, discovering little of the country till you enter a clump of stately firs upon the summit. Over-arch'd by these firs is an octagonal seat, the back of which is so contrived as to form a table or pedestal for a bowl or goblet, thus inscribed—

" To all friends round the Wrekin!

DESCRIPTION OF THE LEASOWES. 29

This facetious inscription, being an old Shropshire health, is a commemoration of his country friends, from which this part of Shropshire is divided : add to this that The Wrekin, that large and venerable hill, appears full in front, at the distance of about thirty miles.

The scene is a very fine one, divided by the firs into several compartments, each answering to the octagonal seat in the centre; to each of which is allotted a competent number of striking objects to make a complete picture. A long serpentine stream washes the foot of this hill, and is lost behind trees at one end, and a bridge thrown over at the other. Over this the eye is carried from very romantic home-scenes to very beautiful ones at a distance. It is impossible to give an idea of that immense variety, that fine configuration of parts, which engage our attention from this place. In one of the compartments you have a simple scene of a cottage, and a road winding behind a farm-house half covered with trees, upon the top of some wild sloping ground; and in another a view of the town, appearing from hence as upon the shelving banks of a large piece of water in the flat. Suffice it to say, that the hill and vale, plain and woodland, villages and single houses, blue distant mountains that skirt the horizon, and green hills romantically jumbled, that form the intermediate ground, make this spot more than commonly striking—nor is there to be seen an acre of level ground through the large extent to which the eye is carried.

Hence the path winds on betwixt two small benches, each of which exhibits a pleasing landscape, which cannot escape the eye of a connoisseur.

Here we wind through a small thicket, and soon enter a cavity in the hill, filled with trees, in the centre of which is a seat, from whence is discover-

30 DESCRIPTION OF THE LEASOWES.

ed, gleaming across the trees, a considerable length of the serpentine stream before mentioned, running under a slight rustic bridge to the right : hence we ascend in a kind of Gothic alcove, looking down a slope, sided with large oaks and tall beeches, which together over-arch the scene. On the back of this building is found the following

INSCRIPTION.

“ O you that bathe in courtlye blyffe
Or toyle in Fortune's giddy spheare,
Do not too rashlye deeme amyffe
Of him that bydes contented here.

Nor yet disdeigne the russet stoale
Which o'er each carelesse lymbe he flyngs;
Nor yet deryde the beechen bowle
In whyche he quaffs the lympid springs.

Forgive him, if at eve or dawne,
Devoide of worldlye cark, he stray,
Or all beside some flowerye lawne
He waste his inoffensive daye.

So may he pardonne fraud and strife,
If such in courtlye haunt he see;
For faults there beene in busy life
From whyche these peaceful glennes are free.”

Below this alcove is a large sloping lawn, finely bounded, crossed by the serpentine water before-mentioned, and interspersed with single, or clumps of oaks at agreeable distances. Further on the scene is finely varied, the hills rising and falling towards the opposite concavities, by the side of a long winding vale, with the most graceful confusion. Among other scenes that form this landscape, a fine hanging wood, backed and contrasted with a

DESCRIPTION OF THE LEASOWES. 31

wild heath, intersected with cross roads, is a very considerable object. Near adjoining to this is a seat, from whence the water is seen to advantage in many different stages of its progress; or where (as a poetical friend once observed) the proprietor has taken the Naiad by the hand, and led her an irregular dance into the valley.

Proceeding hence through a wicket, we enter upon another lawn, beyond which is a new theatre of wild shaggy precipices hanging coppice ground, and smooth round hills between, being not only different, but even of an opposite character, to the ground from which we passed. Walking along the head of this lawn, we come to a seat under a spreading beech, with this

INSCRIPTION.

Hoc erat in votis : modus agri non ita magnus,
Hortus ubi, et tecto vicinus jugis aquæ fons,
Et paulum sylvæ super his foret. Auctius atque
Dii melius fecere." —

IMITATION.

This was my wish—an humble spot of ground,
A garden well-dispos'd, and fenc'd around,
A bubbling fountain, to my dwelling nigh,
With crystal treasures stor'd, and never dry,
The whole defended by a modest wood—
This was my wish—my wish the gods allow'd,
And ev'n beyond that wish indulgently bestow'd. }
Hull.

In the centre of the hanging lawn before you is discovered the house, half hid with trees and bushes: a little hanging wood, and a piece of winding water, issues through a noble clump of large oaks and spreading beeches. At the distance of about ten or twelve miles Lord Stamford's

grounds appear, and beyond these the Clet-hill in Shropshire. The scene here consists of admirably-varied ground, and is, I think, a very fine one. Hence passing still along the top of the lawn, we cross another gate, and behind the fence begin to descend into the valley. About half way down is a small bench, which throws the eye upon a near scene of hanging woods and shaggy wild declivities, intermixed with smooth green slopes and scenes of cultivation.

We now return again into the great lawn at bottom, and soon come to a seat, which gives a nearer view of the water before-mentioned, between the trunks of high overshadowing oaks and beeches, beyond which the winding line of trees is continued down the valley to the right. To the left, at a distance, the top of Clent hill appears, and the house upon a swell, amidst trees and bushes. In the centre, the eye is carried by a sideling view down a length of lawn, till it rests upon the town and spire of Hales, with some picturesque and beautiful ground rising behind it.

Somewhat out of the path, and in the centre of a noble clump of stately beeches, is a seat inscribed to Mr. Spence, in these words:

IOSEPHO SPENCE,
eximio nostro Critoni;
cui dicari vellet

Mvsarvm omnivm et Gratiarvm chorvs,
dicat amicitia.

1758.

EXPLANATION.

Dedicated by friendship
to JOSEPH SPENCE,
our most excellent Crito,
whom
the unanimous consent
of every Muse and Grace
made choice of
to be so distinguished.

Hull.

We now, through a small gate, enter what is called The Lover's Walk, and proceed immediately to a seat where the water is seen very advantageously at full length ; which, though not large, is so agreeably shaped, and has its bounds so well concealed, that the beholder may receive less pleasure from many lakes of greater extent. The margin on one side is fringed with alders, the other is overhung with most stately oaks and beeches, and the middle beyond the water presents the Hales Owen scene, with a group of houses on the slope behind, and the horizon well fringed with the wood. Now winding a few paces round the margin of the water, we come to another small bench, which presents the former scene somewhat varied, with the addition of a whited village among trees upon a hill. Proceeding on, we enter the pleasing gloom of this agreeable walk, and come to a bench beneath a spreading beech that overhangs both walk and water, which has been called the Affignation Seat, and has this inscription on the back of it :

Nerine Galatea ! thymo mihi dulcior Hyblæ,
Candidior cygnis, hedera formosior alba !
Cum primum pasti repetent præsepia tauri,
Si qua tui Corydonis habet te cura, venito.

I M I T A T I O N.

O Galatea ! Nereus' lovely child,
 Sweeter than Hybla thyme, more undefil'd
 Than down of swan, or ivy's purest white,
 When the full oxen, warn'd by fading light,
 Home to the stall their sober footsteps bend,
 If Damon's dear, to Damon's call attend.

Hall.

Here the path begins gradually to ascend beneath a depth of shade, by the side of which is a small bubbling rill, either forming little peninsulas, rolling over pebbles, or falling down small cascades, all under cover, and taught to murmur very agreeably. This very soft and pensive scene, very properly stiled The Lover's Walk, is terminated with an ornamented urn, inscribed to Miss Dolman, a beautiful and amiable relation of Mr. Shenstone's, who died of the small-pox, about twenty-one years of age, in the following words on one side :

Peramabili fime consobrinæ
 M. D.

On the other side :

Ah ! Maria !
 pvellarvm elegantissima !
 ah Flore venvstatis abrepta,
 vale !
 hev quanto minvs est
 cvm reliqvis versari,
 quam tvi
 meminisse !

EXPLANATION.

—Sacred to the memory
of
a most amiable kinswoman.
Ah! Maria!
most elegant of nymphs!
snatched from us
in thy bloom of beauty,
ah! farewell!

How much inferior
is the living conversation
of others
to the bare remembrance
of thee!

Hull.

The ascent from hence winds somewhat more steeply to another seat, where the eye is thrown over a rough scene of broken and furzy ground, upon a piece of water in the flat, whose extremities are hid behind trees and shrubs, amongst which the house appears, and makes upon the whole no unpleasing picture. The path still winds under cover up the hill, the steep declivity of which is somewhat eased by the serpentine sweep of it, till we come to a small bench, with this line from Pope's *Eloisa*:

“ Divine oblivion of low thoughted Care !”

The opening before it presents a solitary scene of trees, thickets, and precipice, and terminates upon a green hill, with a clump of firs on the top of it.

We now find the great use as well as beauty of the serpentine path in climbing up this wood, the first seat of which, alluding to the rural scene before it, has the following lines from Virgil:

36 DESCRIPTION OF THE LEASOWES.

— “ Hic latis otia fundis
Speluncæ, vivique lacus, hic frigida Tempe,
Mugitusque boum, mollesque sub arbore somni.”

IMITATION.

Here tranquil leisures in the ample field,
Here caves and living lakes their pleasures yield;
Here vales invite where sports the cooling breeze,
And peaceful sleep beneath embow’ring trees,
While lowing herds surround. *Hull.*

Here the eye looking down a slope beneath the spreading arms of oak and beech trees, passes first over some rough furzy ground, then over water to the large swelling lawn, in the centre of which the house is discovered among trees and thickets: this forms the fore ground. Beyond this appears a swell of waste furzy land, diversified with a cottage, and a road that winds behind a farm-house and a fine clump of trees. The back scene of all is a semicircular range of hills, diversified with woods, scenes of cultivation, and inclosures, to about four or five miles’ distance.

Still winding up into the wood, we come to a slight seat, opening through the trees to a bridge of five piers, crossing a large piece of water at about half a mile’s distance. The next seat looks down from a considerable height, along the side of a steep precipice, upon irregular and pleasing ground. And now we turn upon a sudden into a long straight-lined walk in the wood, arched over with tall trees, and terminating with a small rustic building. Though the walk, as I said, be straight-lined, yet the base rises and falls so agreeably, as leaves no room to censure its formality. About the middle of this avenue, which runs the whole length of this hanging wood, we arrive un-

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pectedly at a lofty Gothic seat, whence we look down a slope, more considerable than that before mentioned, through the wood on each side. This view is indeed a fine one, the eye first travelling down over well-variegated ground into the valley, where is a large piece of water, whose sloping banks give all the appearance of a noble river. The ground from hence rises gradually to the top of the Clent hill, at three or four miles' distance, and the landscape is enriched with a view of Hales Owen, the late Lord Dudley's house, and a large wood of Lord Lyttleton's. It is impossible to give an adequate description of this view, the beauty of it depending upon the great variety of objects and beautiful shape of ground, and all at such a distance as to admit of being seen distinctly.

Hence we proceed to the rustic building before mentioned, a slight and unexpensive edifice, formed of rough unhewn stone, commonly called here The Temple of Pan, having a trophy of the Tibia and Syrinx, and this inscription over the entrance :

“ Pan primus calamos cera conjungere plures
Edocuit; Pan curat oves, oviumque magistros.”

IMITATION.

Pan, god of shepherds, first inspir'd our swains
Their pipes to frame, and tune their rural strains;
Pan from impending harm the fold defends,
And Pan the master of the fold befriends. *Hull.*

Hence mounting once more to the right, through this dark umbrageous walk, we enter at once upon a lightsome high natural terrace, whence the eye is thrown over all the scenes we have seen before, together with many fine additional ones, and all beheld from a declivity that approaches as near a

38 DESCRIPTION OF THE LEASOWES.

precipice as is agreeable. In the middle is a seat with this inscription :

Divini gloria rvris !

EXPLANATION.

O glory of the sylvan scene divide ! *Hull,*

To give a better idea of this, by far the most magnificent scene here, it were, perhaps, best to divide it in two distinct parts—the noble concave in the front, and the rich valley towards the right.—In regard to the former, if a boon companion could enlarge his idea of a punch-bowl, ornamented within with all the romantic scenery the Chinese ever yet devised, it would, perhaps, afford him the highest idea he could possibly conceive of earthly happiness: he would certainly wish to swim in it. Suffice it to say, that the horizon, or brim, is as finely varied as the cavity. It would be idle here to mention the Clee hills, the Wrekin, the Welsh mountains, or Caer Caradoc, at a prodigious distance; which, though they finish the scene agreeably, should not be mentioned at the Leasowes, the beauty of which turns chiefly upon distinguishable scenes. The valley upon the right is equally enriched, and the opposite side thereof well fringed with woods, and the high hills on one side this long winding vale rolling agreeably into the hollows on the other. But these are a kind of objects which, though really noble in the survey, will not strike a reader in description as they would a spectator upon the spot.

Hence returning back into the wood, and crossing Pan's Temple, we go directly down the slope into another part of Mr. Shenstone's grounds, the path leading down through very pleasing home-

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scenes of well-shaped ground, exhibiting a most perfect concave and convex, till we come at a seat under a noble beech, presenting a rich variety of fore-ground, and at, perhaps, half a mile's distance, the Gothic alcove on a hill well covered with wood, a pretty cottage under trees in the more distant part of the concave, and a farm-house upon the right, all picturesque objects.

The next and the subsequent seat afford pretty much the same scenes a little enlarged, with the addition of that remarkable clump of trees called Frankly Beeches, adjoining to the old family-seat of the Lyttletons, and from whence the present Lord Lyttleton derives his title.

We now come to a handsome Gothic screen, backed with a clump of firs, which throws the eye in front full upon a cascade in the valley, issuing from beneath a dark shade of poplars. The house appears in the centre of a large swelling lawn, bushed with trees and thicket. The pleasing variety of easy swells and hollows, bounded by scenes less smooth and cultivated, affords the most delightful picture of domestic retirement and tranquillity.

We now descend to a seat inclosed with handsome pales, and backed with firs, inscribed to Lord Lyttleton. It presents a beautiful view up the valley contracted gradually, and ending in a group of most magnificent oaks and beeches. The right-hand side is enlivened with two striking cascades, and a winding stream seen at intervals between tufts of trees and woodland. To the left appears the hanging wood already mentioned, with the Gothic screen on the slope in the centre.

Winding still downwards, we come to a small seat, where one of the offices of the house, and a few of a cottage on very high ground, is seen over the tops of the trees of the grove in the adjacent

40 DESCRIPTION OF THE LEASOWES.

valley, giving an agreeable instance of the abrupt inequality of ground in this romantic well-variegated country. The next seat shews another face of the same valley, the water gliding calmly along betwixt two seeming groves without any cascade, as a contrast to the former one, where it was broken by cascades: the scene very significantly alluded to by the motto,

“ Rura mihi, et rigui placeant in vallibus amnes,
Flumina amem, silvasque inglorious !”

IMITATION.

Woods, vales, and running streams, my mind
enchant;
The woods and streams inglorious let me haunt.

We descend now to a beautiful gloomy scene, called Virgil's Grove, where, on the entrance, we pass by a small obelisk on the right hand, with this inscription :

P. Virgilio Maroni
Lapis iste cūm lyco sacer esto.

EXPLANATION.

To
P. Virgilious Maro,
This obelisk
and grove
is consecrated *.

* *Note.*—It was customary with the Romans to give a prænomen, or first name, in the manner of our Christian names; accordingly Virgil had that of Publius. He derived the addition of Maro from his father, who was so called.

DESCRIPTION OF THE LEASOWES. 41

Before this is a slight bench, where some of the same objects are seen again, but in a different point of light. It is not very easy either to paint or describe this delightful grove: however, as the former has been more than once attempted, I will hope to apologize for an imperfect description, by the difficulty found by those who have aimed to sketch it with their pencil. Be it, therefore, first observed, that the whole scene is opaque and gloomy, consisting of a small deep valley or dingle, the sides of which are inclosed with irregular tufts of hazel and other underwood, and the whole overshadowed with lofty trees rising out of the bottom of the dingle, through which a copious stream makes its way through mossy banks, enamelled with primroses, and variety of wild wood flowers. The first feat we approach is thus inscribed:

Celeberrimo Poetæ
IACOBO THOMSON,
Prope fontes illi non fastiditos
G. S.
Sedem hanc ornavit.

EXPLANATION.
To the
much celebrated Poet
JAMES THOMSON,
This feat was placed
near his favourite springs
by
W. S.

“ Quæ tibi, quæ tali reddam pro carmine dona?
Nam neque me tantum venientis sibilus austri,
Nec percussa juvant fluctu tam littora, nec quæ
Saxosias inter decurrunt flumina valles.”

IMITATION.

How shall I thank thy Muse, so form'd to please
 For not the whisp' rings of the southern breeze,
 Nor banks still-beaten by the breaking wave,
 Nor limpid rills that pebbly vallies lave,
 Yield such delight.—

This seat is placed upon a steep bank on the edge of the valley, from which the eye is here drawn down into the flat below, by the light that glimmers in front, and by the sound of various cascades, by which the winding stream is agreeably broken. Opposite to this seat the ground rises again in an easy concave to a kind of dripping fountain, where a small rill trickles down a succession of rock-work, through fern, liver-wort, and aquatic weeds, the green area in the middle through which the stream winds, being as well shaped as can be imagined. After falling down these cascades, it winds under a bridge of coral arch, and then empties itself into a small lake which catches it a little below. This terminates the scene upon the right; and after these objects have for some time amused the spectators, his eye rambles to the left, where one of the most beautiful cascades imaginable is seen, by way of incident through a kind of vista or glade, falling down a precipice over-arched with trees, and strikes with surprise. It is impossible to express the pleasure which one feels on this occasion; for though surprise alone is not excellence, it may serve to quicken the effect of what is beautiful. I believe none ever beheld this grove without a thorough sense of satisfaction; and were one to chuse any particular spot of this perfectly Arcadian farm, it should, perhaps, be this; although it so well contrasts both with the terrace and with some other scenes, that one cannot wish them ever

be divided. We now proceed to a seat at the bottom of a large root on the side of a slope, with this inscription:

INSCRIPTION.

- ‘ O let me haunt this peaceful shade,
 ‘ Nor let Ambition e’er invade
 ‘ The tenants of this leafy bower,
 ‘ That shun her paths, and slight her power.
 ‘ Hither the peaceful halcyon flies
 ‘ From social meads and open skies,
 ‘ Pleas’d by this rill her course to steer,
 ‘ And hide her sapphire plumage here.
 ‘ The trout, bedropp’d with crimson stains,
 ‘ Forfakes the river’s proud domains,
 ‘ Forfakes the sun’s unwelcome gleam,
 ‘ To lurk within this humble stream.
 ‘ And sure I hear the Naiad say,
 “ Flow, flow, my Stream! this devious way;
 “ Tho’ lovely soft thy murmurs are,
 “ Thy waters lovely, cool, and fair.
 “ Flow, gentle Stream! nor let the vain
 “ Thy small unfully’d stores disdain;
 “ Nor let the pensive sage repine,
 “ Whose latent course resembles thine.”

The view from it is a calm tranquil scene of water, gliding through sloping ground, with a sketch through the trees of the small pond below.

The scene in this place is that of water stealing along through a rude sequestered vale, the ground on each side covered with weeds and field flowers as that before is kept close shaven. Farther on we lose all sight of water, and only hear the noise, without having the appearance; a

44 DESCRIPTION OF THE LEASOWES.

kind of effect which the Chinese are fond of producing in what they call their Scenes of enchantment. We now turn, all on a sudden, upon the high cascade which we admired before in vista. The scene around is quite a grotto of native stone running up it, roots of trees overhanging it, and the whole shaded over head. However, we first approach, upon the left, a chalybeat spring, with an iron bowl chained to it, and this inscription upon a stone :

Fons ferrugineus
Divæ quæ secessu isto frui concedit.

EXPLANATION.

To the Goddess
who bestowed the enjoyment
of these retreats,
This chalybeat spring
is consecrated.

Hull.

Then turning to the right, we find a stone seat, making part of the aforesaid cave, with this well-applied inscription :

Intus aquæ dulces, vivoque sedilia saxo;
Nympharum domus.

IMITATION.

Within are wholesome springs, and marble seats
Carv'd in the living rock, of Nymphs the blest'd
retreats.

Hull.

Which I have often heard Mr. Shenstone term the definition of a grotto. We now wind up a shady path on the left hand, and crossing the head of this cascade, pass beside the river that supplies it in our way up to the house. One seat first occurs

DESCRIPTION OF THE LEASOWES. 45

under a shady oak as we ascend the hill; soon after we enter the shrubbery, which half surrounds the house, where we find two seats, thus inscribed to two of his most particular friends. The first thus:

Amicitia^e et meritis
RICHARDI GRAVES:

EXPLANATION.

To the
Friendship and merits
of
RICHARD GRAVES.

Ipsæ te, Tityre! pinvs.
Ipsi te fontes, ipsa hæc arbvsta, vocabant.

EXPLANATION.

Thee, Tityrus! the pines
The chrystal springs, the very groves, invok'd.

and a little further the other, with the following inscription:

Amicitia^e et meritis
RICHARDI JAGO.

EXPLANATION.

To the
friendship and merits
of
RICHARD JAGO.

From this last is an opening down the valley over a large sliding lawn, well edged with oaks, to a piece of water crossed by a considerable bridge in the flat—the steeple of Hales, a village amid trees, making on the whole a very pleasing picture. Thus winding through flowering shrubs,

46 DESCRIPTION OF THE LEASOWES.

beside a menagerie for doves, we are conducted to the stables. But let it not be forgot, that on the entrance into this shrubbery the first object that strikes us is a Venus de Medicis, beside a bason of gold-fish, encompassed round with shrubs, and illustrated with the following inscription;

———“ Semi-reducta Venus*.”

“ To Venus, Venus here retir’d,
My sober vows I pay;
Not her on Paphian plains admir’d,
The bold, the pert, the gay;
Nor her whose am’rous leer prevail’d
To bribe the Phrygian boy;
Not her who, clad in armour, fail’d
To save disastrous Troy.

Fresh rising from the foamy tide,
She ev’ry bosom warms,
While half withdrawn she seems to hi
And half reveals, her charms.

Learn hence, ye boastful sons of Taste!
Who plan the rural shade,
Learn hence to shun the vicious waste
Of pomp, at large display’d.

Let sweet Concealment’s magic art
Your mazy bounds invest,
And while the sight unveils a part,
Let Fancy paint the rest.

Let coy Reserve with Cost unite
To grace your wood or field,
No ray obtrusive pall the sight,
In aught you paint or build.

* EXPLANATION.
Venus half-retired.

And far be driv'n the sumptuous glare
Of gold, from British groves,
And far the meretricious air
Of China's vain alcoves.

'Tis bashful Beauty ever twines
The most coercive chain;
'Tis she that sovereign rule declines,
Who best deserves to reign."

VERSES TO MR. SHENSTONE,

Written on a Ferme Ornée, near Birmingham.

BY THE LATE LADY LUXBOROUGH.

'TIS Nature here bids pleasing scenes arise,
And wisely gives them Cynthia to revise;
To veil each blemish, brighten ev'ry grace,
Yet still preserve the lovely parent's face.
How well the Bard obeys each valley tells, 5
These lucid streams, gay meads, and lonely cells,
Where modest Art in silence lurks conceal'd,
While nature shines, so gracefully reveal'd,
That she triumphant claims the total plan,
And with fresh pride adopts the work of man. 10

TO WILLIAM SHENSTONE, ESQ.

AT THE LEASOWES.

BY MR. GRAVES.

“ Vellem in amicitia sic erraremus †!” HOR.

SEE, the tall youth! by partial Fate's decree,
To affluence born, and from restraint set free;
Eager he seeks the scenes of gay resort,
The Mall, the rout, the playhouse, and the court:

† IMITATION.

In friendship thus, O! be we still beguil'd!

Soon for some varnish'd nymph of dubious fame, 5
 Or powder'd peerefs, counterfeits a flame.
 Behold him now, enraptur'd, swear and sigh,
 Drefs, dance, drink, revel, all he knows not why,
 Till by kind Fate restor'd to country air,
 He marks the roses of some rural Fair; 10
 Smit with her unaffected native charms,
 A real passion soon his bosom warms;
 And, wak'd from idle dreams, he takes a wife,
 And tastes the genuine happiness of life.
 Thus, in the vacant season of the year, 15
 Some Templar gay begin his wild career:
 From seat to seat o'er pompous scenes he flies,
 Views all with equal wonder and surprise,
 Till, sick of domes, arcades, and temples, grown,
 He hies fatigu'd, not satisfy'd, to Town. 20
 Yet if some kinder genius point his way
 To where the Muses o'er thy Leasowes stray,
 Charm'd with the sylvan beauties of the place,
 Where Art assumes the sweets of Nature's face,
 Each hill, each dale, each consecrated grove, 25
 Each lake, and falling stream, his rapture move.
 Like the sage captive in Calypso's grot,
 The cares, the pleasures of the world forgot,
 Of calm content he hails the genuine sphere,
 And longs to dwell a blissful hermit here. 30

VERSES RECEIVED BY THE POST

FROM A LADY UNKNOWN, 1761.

HEALTH to the Bard in Leaſowes' happy
groves ;

Health, and ſweet conſerſe with the Muſe he loves
The humbleſt vot'ry of the tuneful Nine,
With trembling hand, attempts her artleſs line,
In numbers ſuch as untaught Nature brings,
As ſlow, ſpontaneous, like thy native ſprings.

But, ah ! what airy forms around me riſe !
The ruſſet mountain glows with richer dyes ;
In circling dance a pigmy crowd appear,
And, hark ! an infant voice ſalutes my ear !
“ Mortal ! thy aim we know, thy taſk approve ;
His merit honour, and his genius love :
For us what verdant carpets has he ſpread,
Where, nightly, we our myſtic mazes tread !
For us each ſhady grove and rural ſeat,
His falling ſtreams and flowing numbers ſweet !
Didſt thou not mark, amid the winding dell,
What tuneful verſe adorns the moſſy cell ?
There ev'ry Fairy of our ſprightly train
Reſort, to bleſs the woodland and the plain :
There, as we move, unbidden beauties glow,
The green turf brightens, and the violets blow ;
And there with thoughts ſublime we bleſs the ſwain,
Nor we inſpire, nor he attends, in vain.

Go, ſimple Rhimer ! bear this meſſage true ;
The truths that Fairies dictate none ſhall rue.
Say to the Bard in Leaſowes' happy grove,
Whom Dryads honour, and whom Fairies love—

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VERSES TO MR. SHENSTONE.

51

Content thyself no longer that thy lays,
 By others foster'd, lend to others praise; 30
 No longer to the fav'ring world refuse
 The welcome treasures of thy polish'd Muse;
 The scatter'd blooms that boast thy valu'd name;
 Collect, unite, and give the wreath to Fame;
 Ne'er can thy virtues, or thy verse, engage 35
 More solid praise than in this happiest age,
 When sense and merit's cherish'd by the throne,
 And each illustrious privilege their own.
 Tho' modest be thy gentle Muse, I ween,
 Oh! lead her blushing from the daisy'd green,
 A fit attendant on Britannia's Queen." 41 }

Ye sportive Elves! as faithful I relate
 Th' intrusted mandates of your Fairy state,
 Visit these wilds again with nightly care;
 So shall my kine, of all the herd, repair 45
 In healthful plight to fill the copious pail;
 My sheep lie pent with safety in the dale;
 My poultry fear no robber in the roost;
 My linen more than common whiteness boast:
 Let order, peace, and housewifery, be mine;
 Shenstone! be fancy, fame, and fortune, thine! 51

COTSWOLDIA.

ON THE DISCOVERY

OF AN ECHO AT EDGBASTON.

By ———

HA! what art thou, whose voice unknown
 Pours on these plains its tender moan?
 Art thou the nymph in Shenstone's dale,
 Who dost with plaintive note bewail
 That he forsakes th'Aonian maids,
 To court inconstant rills and shades?
 Mourn not, sweet Nymph!—Alas! in vain
 Do they invite, and thou complain—

Yet while he woo'd the gentle throng,
 With liquid lay and melting song,
 The list'ning herd around him stray'd,
 In wanton frisk the lambkins play'd,
 And every Naiad ceas'd to lave
 Her azure limbs amid the wave:
 The Graces danc'd; the rosy band
 Of Smiles and Loves went hand in hand,
 And purple Pleasures strew'd the way
 With sweetest flow'rs; and every ray
 Of each fond Muse with rapture fir'd,
 To glowing thoughts his breast inspir'd;
 The hills rejoic'd, the vallies rung,
 All Nature smil'd while Shenstone sung.

So charm'd his lay; but now no more—
 Ah! why dost thou repeat—"No more?"
 Ev'n now he hies to deck the grove,
 To deck the scene the Muses love,
 And soon again will own their sway,
 And thou resound the peerless lay,
 And with immortal numbers fill
 Each rocky cave and vocal hill.

VERSES BY MR. DODSLEY,

ON HIS FIRST ARRIVAL AT THE LEASOWES, 1754.

“**H**OW shall I fix my wand’ring eye? where
find

The source of this enchantment? Dwells it in
The woods? or waves there not a magic wand
O’er the translucent waters? Sure, unseen,
Some fav’ring power directs the happy lines 5
That sketch these beauties; swells the rising hills,
And scoops the dales to Nature’s finest forms,
Vague, undetermin’d, infinite; untaught
By line or compass, yet supremely fair!”

So spake Philenor, as with raptur’d gaze 10
He travers’d Damon’s farm: from distant plains
He sought his friend’s abode; nor had the fame
Of that new-form’d Arcadia reach’d his ear.

And thus the swain, as o’er each hill and dale,
Thro’ lawn or thicket, he pursu’d his way: 15
“What is it gilds the verdure of these meads
With hues more bright than Fancy paints the
flowers

Of paradise? What Naiad’s guiding hand
Leads, thro’ the broider’d vale, these lucid rills,
That, murm’ring as they flow, bear melody 20
Along their banks, and thro’ the vocal shades
Improve the music of the woodland choir?
What pensive Dryad rais’d yon’ solemn grove,
Where minds contemplative, at close of day
Retiring, muse o’er Nature’s various works, 25
Her wonders venerate, or her sweets enjoy?—
What room for doubt? some rural deity,
Presiding, scatters o’er th’ unequal lawns,
In beauteous wildness, yon’ fair-spreading trees,

And, mingling woods and waters, hills and dale
 And herds and bleating flocks, domestic fowl,
 And those that swim the lake, sees rising round
 More pleasing landscapes than in Tempe's vale
 Peneus water'd. Yes, some sylvan god
 Spreads wide the varied prospect, waves the wood
 Lifts the proud hills, and clears the shining lake
 While, from the congregated waters pour'd,
 The bursting torrent tumbles down the steep
 In foaming fury; fierce, irregular,
 Wild, interrupted, cross'd with rocks and roots,
 And interwoven trees; till, soon absorb'd,
 An opening cavern all its rage entombs.
 So vanish human glories! such the pomp
 Of swelling warriors, of ambitious kings,
 Who fret and strut their hour upon the stage
 Of busy life, and then are heard no more!

“Yes, 'tis enchantment all—And see! the spell
 The pow'rful incantations, magic verse,
 Inscrib'd on ev'ry tree, alcove, or urn.—
 Spells!—Incantations!—Ah! my tuneful Friend
 Thine are the numbers, thine the wondrous work!
 Yes, great Magician! now I read thee right,
 And lightly weigh all forcery but thine.
 No Naiad's leading step conducts the rill,
 Nor sylvan god presiding skirts the lawn
 In beauteous wildness, with fair-spreading trees,
 Nor magic wand has circumscrib'd the scene:
 'Tis thine own taste, thy genius that presides,
 Nor needs there other deity, nor needs
 More potent spells than they.”—No more the
 swain,

For, lo! his Damon, o'er the tufted lawn
 Advancing, leads him to the social dome.

T O M R. R. D.

ON THE DEATH OF MR. SHENSTONE.

Thee, Shepherd! thee the woods and desert caves,
With wild thyme and the gadding vine o'ergrown,
And all their echoes, mourn. MILT.

'TIS past, my Friend! the transient scene is clos'd!
The fairy pile, th' enchanted vision, rais'd
By Damon's magic skill is lost in air!

What tho' the lawns and pendent woods remain,
Each tinkling stream, each rushing cataract, 5
With lapse incessant echoes thro' the dale?
Yet what avails the lifeless landscape now?
The charm's dissolv'd; the Genius of the wood,
Alas! is flown—for Damon is no more.

As when from fair Lycæum, crown'd with pines,
Or Mænalus, with leaves autumnal strew'd, 11
The tuneful Pan retires, the vocal hills
Resound no more, and all Arcadia mourns.

Yet here we fondly dream'd of lasting joys;
Here we had hop'd, from noisy throngs retir'd, 15
To drink large draughts of Friendship's cordial
stream,

In sweet oblivion wrapt, by Damon's verse,
And social converse many a summer's day.

Romantic wish! in vain frail mortals trace 19
Th' imperfect sketch of human bliss—Whilst yet
Th' enraptur'd fire his well-plann'd structure views
Majestic rising 'midst his infant groves,
Sees the dark laurel spread its glossy shade,
Its languid bloom the purple lilac blend,
Or pale laburnum drop its pensile chain, 25
Death spreads the fatal shaft, and bids his heir
Transplant the cypress round his father's tomb.

Oh! teach me then, like you, my Friend! to
raise

To moral truths my grov'ling song; for, ah!
Too long by lawless Fancy led astray, 30
Of Nymphs and groves I've dream'd, and dancing
Fauns,

Or Naiad leaning o'er her tinkling urn.
Oh! could I learn to sanctify my strains
With hymns, like those by tuneful Meyrick sung—
Or rather catch the melancholy sounds 35
From Warton's reed, or Mason's lyre.—to paint
The sudden gloom that damps my soul—But see!
Melpomene herself has snatch'd the pipe
With which sad Lyttleton his Lucia mourn'd,
And plaintive cries, my Shenstone is no more! 40
B. G.

Verſes written at the Gardens of

WILLIAM SHENSTONE, ESQ.

NEAR BIRMINGHAM, 1756.

Ille terrarum mihi præter omnes
Angulus ridet*.

HOR.

WOULD you these lov'd recesses trace,
And view fair Nature's modest face?
See her in ev'ry field-flower bloom,
O'er ev'ry thicket shed perfume?
By verdant groves, and vocal hills,
By mossy grotts, near purling rills,
Where'er you turn your wond'ring eyes,
Behold her win without disguise.

* I M I T A T I O N.

Whate'er the beauties others boast,
That spot of ground delights me most.

What tho' no pageant trifles here,
 As in the glare of courts, appear? 10
 Tho' rarely here be heard the name
 Of rank or title, power or fame?
 Yet, if ingenuous be your mind,
 A bliss more pure and unconfin'd
 Your step attends—Draw freely nigh,
 And meet the Bard's benignant eye: 15
 On him no pedant forms await,
 No proud reserve shuts up his gate;
 No spleen, no party views, controul
 That warm benevolence of soul 20
 Which prompts the friendly gen'rous part,
 Regardless of each venal art,
 Regardless of the world's acclaim,
 And courteous with no selfish aim.
 Draw freely nigh, and welcome find, 25
 If not the costly, yet the kind.
 Oh! he will lead you to the cells
 Where ev'ry Muse and Virtue dwell,
 Where the green Dryads guard his woods,
 Where the blue Naiads guide his floods, 30
 Where all the Sister Graces gay,
 That shap'd his walk's meand'ring way,
 Stark-naked, or but wreath'd with flowers,
 Lie slum'bring soft beneath his bowers.
 Wak'd by the stock-dove's melting strain, 35
 Behold them rise! and, with the train
 Of Nymphs that haunt the stream or grove,
 Or o'er the flow'ry champain rove,
 Join hand in hand—attentive gaze—
 And mark the dance's mystic maze. 40
 "Such is the waving line," they cry,
 "For ever dear to Fancy's eye!
 Yon' stream that wanders down the dale,
 The spiral wood, the winding vale,
 The path which, wrought with hidden skill, 45
 Slow twining, scales yon' distant hill,

58 VERSES TO MR. SHENSTONE.

With fir invested—all combine
 To recommend the waving line.
 The wreathed rod of Bacchus fair,
 The ringlets of Apollo's hair, 50
 The wand by Mria's offspring borne,
 The smooth volutes of Ammon's horn,
 The structure of the Cyprian dame,
 And each fair female's beauteous frame,
 Shew, to the pupils of Design, 55
 The triumphs of the waving line."

Then gaze, and mark that union sweet
 Where fair convex and concave meet,
 And while, quick shifting as you stray,
 The vivid scenes on fancy play, 60
 The lawn, of aspect smooth and mild,
 The forest ground grotesque and wild,
 The shrub that scents the mountain gale,
 The stream rough dashing down the dale,
 From rock to rock in eddies tost, 65
 'The distant lake in which 'tis lost,
 Blue hills gay beaming thro' the glade,
 Lone urns that solemnize the shade,
 Sweet, interchange of all that charms
 In groves, meads, dingles, riv'lets, farms ! 70
 If aught the fair confusion please,
 With lasting health and lasting ease,
 'To him who form'd the blissful bow'r,
 And gave thy life one tranquil hour,
 With peace and freedom—these possess, 75
 His temperate mind secures the rest.
 But if thy soul such bliss despise,
 Avert thy dull incurious eyes ;
 Go, fix them there where gems and gold,
 Improv'd by art their pow'r unfold ; 80
 Go, try in courtly scenes to trace
 A fairer form of Nature's face,
 Go, scorn Simplicity—but know
 That all our heart-felt joys below,

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VERSES TO MR. SHENSTONE.

59

That all which Virtue loves to name,
Which Art consigns to lasting fame,
Which fixes Wit or Beauties throne,
Derives its source from her alone.

85

88

ARCADIO.

TO WILLIAM SHENSTONE, ESQ.

IN HIS SICKNESS.

BY MR. WOODHOUSE.

YE flow'ry Plains! ye breezy Woods!
Ye Bowers and gay Alcoves!
Ye falling Streams! ye silver Floods!
Ye Grottoes, and ye Groves!

Alas! my heart feels no delight,
Tho' I your charms survey,
While he consumes in pain the night,
In languid sighs the day.

5

The flowers disclose a thousand blooms,
A thousand scents diffuse,
Yet all in vain they shed perfumes,
In vain display their hues.

10

Restrain, ye Flowers! your thoughtless pride,
Recline your gaudy heads,
And sadly drooping, side by side,
Embrace your humid beds.

15

Tall Oaks! that o'er the woodland shade
Your lofty summits rear,
Ah! why, in wonted charms array'd,
Expand your leaves so fair!

20

For, lo! the flowers as gayly smile,
 As wanton waves the tree,
 And tho' I sadly 'plain the while,
 Yet they regard not me.

Ah! should the fates an arrow send,
 And strike the fatal wound,
 Who, who shall then your sweets defend,
 Or fence your beauties round?

But hark! perhaps the plummy throng
 Have learn'd my plaintive tale,
 And some sad dirge or mournful song
 Comes floating in the gale.

Ah, no! they chant a sprightly strain
 To sooth an am'rous mate,
 Unmindful of my anxious pain,
 And his uncertain fate.

But see! these little murm'ring rills
 With fond repinings rove,
 And trickle wailing down the hills,
 Or weep along the grove.

Oh! mock not if, beside your stream,
 You hear me, too, repine,
 Or aid with sighs your mournful theme,
 And fondly call him mine.

Ye envious Winds! the cause display,
 In whispers as ye blow,
 Why did your treach'rous gales convey
 The poison'd shafts of woe?

Did he not plant the shady bower,
 Where you so blithly meet?
 The scented shrub, and fragrant flower,
 To make your breezes sweet?

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VERSES TO MR. SHENSTONE.

61

And must he leave the wood, the field,
The dear Arcadian reign?

Can neither verse nor virtue shield
The guardian of the plain?

55

Must he his tuneful breath resign,
Whom all the Muses love?
That round his brow their laurels twine,
And all his songs approve.

Preserve him, mild Omnipotence!
Our Father, King, and God!
Who clear'st the paths of life and sense,
Or stopp'st them at thy nod.

Bless'd Power! who calm'st the raging deep,
His valued health restore,
Nor let the sons of Genius weep,
Nor let the Good deplore.

65

But if thy boundless wisdom knows
His longer date an ill,
Let not my soul a wish disclose
To contradict thy will.

70

For happy, happy were the change,
For such a godlike mind,
To go where kindred spirits range,
Nor leave a wish behind.

75

And tho' to share his pleasures here
Kings might their state forego,
Yet must he feel such raptures there
As none can taste below.

80

VERSES LEFT ON A SEAT,
THE HAND UNKNOWN.

O Earth! to his remains indulgent be,
Who so much care and cost bestow'd on thee;
Who crown'd thy barren hills with useful shade,
And cheer'd with tinkling rills each silent glade;
Here taught the day to wear a thoughtful gloom, 5
And there enliven'd Nature's vernal bloom.
Propitious Earth! lie lightly on his head,
And ever on his tomb thy vernal glories spread! 8

CORIDON, A PASTORAL.

TO THE MEMORY OF WILLIAM SHENSTONE. ESQ.

BY MR. J. CUNNINGHAM.

I

COME, Shepherds! we'll follow the herse,
And see our lov'd Corydon laid;
Tho' sorrow may blemish the verse,
Yet let the sad tribute be paid.
They call'd him the Pride of the plain: 5
In sooth he was gentle and kind;
He mark'd in his elegant strain
The graces that glow'd in his mind.

III.

On purpose he planted yon' trees,
That birds in the covert might dwell; 10
He cultur'd his thyme for the bees,
But never would rille their cell.

VERSES TO MR. SHENSTONE.

63

Ye Lambkins ! that play'd at his feet,
Go bleat—and your master bemoan :
His music was artless and sweet,
His manners as mild as your own.

15

III.

No verdure shall cover the vale,
No bloom on the blossoms appear ;
The sweets of the forest shall fail,
And winter discolour the year.
No birds in our hedges shall sing,
(Our hedges, so vocal before)
Since he that should welcome the spring
Can greet the gay season no more.

20

IV.

His Phyllis was fond of his praise,
And poets came round in a throng ;
They listen'd, and envy'd his lays,
But which of them equall'd his song ?
Ye Shepherds ! henceforward be mute,
For lost is the Pastoral strain ;
So give me my Corydon's flute,
And thus—let me break it in twain.

25

32

E L E G I E S.

WRITTEN ON MANY DIFFERENT OCCASIONS.

Tantum inter densas, umbrosa cacumina fagas
Assidue veniebat; ibi hæc incondita, solus,
Montibus et filvis studio jactabat inani! VIRG.

IMITATION.

The spreading beech alone he would explore
With frequent step; beneath its shady top,
(Ah! profitless employ!) to hills and groves
These indigested lays he wont repeat.

E L E G Y I.

He arrives at his retirement in the country, and
takes occasion to expatiate in praise of simplicity. To a Friend.

FOR rural virtues, and for native skies,
I bade Augusta's venal souls farewell;
Now 'mid the trees I see my smoke arise,
Now hear the fountains bubbling round my cell.

O may that Genius that secures my rest
Preserve this villa for a friend that's dear!
Ne'er may my vintage glad the fordid breast,
Ne'er tinge the lip that dares be unsincere!

Far from these paths, ye faithless friends! depart
Fly my plain board, abhor my hostile name!
Hence, the faint verse that flows not from the heart
But mourns in labour'd strains, the price of fame

O lov'd simplicity! be thine the prize!
Assiduous Art correct her page in vain!
His be the palm who, guiltless of disguise,
Contemns the pow'r the dull resource to feign!

Still may the mourner, lavish of his tears,
For lucre's venal meed invite my scorn!
Still may the bard, dissembling doubts and fears,
For praise, for flatt'ry sighing, sigh forlorn! 20

Soft as the line of love-sick Hammond flows,
'Twas his fond heart effus'd the melting theme;
Ah! never could Aonia's hill disclose
So fair a fountain or so lov'd a stream.

Ye loveless Bards, intent with artful pains 25
To form a sigh, or to contrive a tear!
Forego your Pindus, and on —— plains
Survey Camilla's charms, and grow sincere.

But thou, my Friend! while in thy youthful soul
Love's gentle tyrant seats his awful throne, 30
Write from thy bosom—let not Art control
The ready pen that makes his edicts known.

Pleasing when youth is long expir'd, to trace
The forms our pencil or our pen design'd!
“Such was our youthful air, and shape, and
face! 35

Such the soft image of our youthful mind!”
Soft whilst we sleep beneath the rural bow'ers,
The Loves and Graces steal unseen away,
And where the turf diffus'd its pomp of flowers,
We wake to wintry scenes of chill decay! 40

Curse the sad fortune that detains thy Fair;
Praise the soft hours that gave thee to her arms;
Paint thy proud scorn of ev'ry vulgar care,
When hope exalts thee, or when doubt alarms,
Where with Oenone thou hast worn the day, 45
Near font or stream, in meditation, rove;
If in the grove Oenone lov'd to stray,
The faithful Muse shall meet thee in the grove. 48

E L E G Y II.

On posthumous Reputation. To a Friend.

O GRIEF of griefs ! that Envy's frantic ire
Should rob the living virtue of its praise ;
O foolish Muses ! that with zeal aspire
To deck the cold insensate shrine with bays.

When the free spirit quits her humble frame.
To tread the skies with radiant garlands crown'd,
Say, will she hear the distant voice of Fame ?
Or, hearing, fancy sweetness in the sound ?

Perhaps even Genius pours a slighted lay ;
Perhaps e'en Friendship sheds a fruitless tear ; 10
Ev'n Lyttleton but vainly trims the bay,
And fondly graces Hammond's mournful bier.

Tho' weeping virgins haunt his favour'd urn,
Renew their chaplets and repeat their sighs ;
'Tho' near his tomb Sabæan odours burn, 15
The loit'ring fragrance will it reach the skies ?

No ; should his Delia votive wreaths prepare,
Delia might place the votive wreaths in vain ;
Yet the dear hope of Delia's future care
Once crown'd his pleasures and dispell'd his pain. 20

Yes—the fair prospect of surviving praise
Can ev'ry sense of present joy excel ;
For this great Hadrian chose laborious days,
'Thro' this, expiring, bade a gay farewell.

Shall then our youths, who Fame's bright fabric
raise, 25

To life's precarious date confine their care ?
O teach them you, to spread the sacred base,
To plan a work thro' latest ages fair !

Is it small transport, as with curious eye
 You trace the story of each Attic sage,
 To think your blooming praise shall time defy? 30
 Shall waft, like odours, thro' the pleasing page?
 To mark the day when, thro' the bulky tome,
 Around your name the varying style refines?
 And readers call their lost attention home, 35
 Led by that index where true genius shines?
 Ah! let not Britons doubt their social aim,
 Whose ardent bosoms catch this ancient fire;
 Cold int'rest melts before the vivid flame,
 And patriot ardours but with life expire. 40

E L E G Y III.

On the untimely Death of a certain learned
 Acquaintance.

IF proud Pygmalion quit his cumb'rous frame,
 Funereal pomp the scanty tear supplies,
 Whilst heralds loud, with venal voice proclaim,
 Lo! here the brave and the puissant lies.

When humbler Alcon leaves his drooping friends, 5
 Pageant nor plume distinguish Alcon's bier;
 The faithful Muse with votive song attends,
 And blots the mournful numbers with a tear.

He little knew the sly penurious art,
 That odious art which Fortune's fav'rites know;
 Form'd to bestow, he felt the warmest heart, 11
 But envious Fate forbade him to bestow.

He little knew to ward the secret wound;
 He little knew that mortals could ensnare;
 Virtue he knew; the noblest joy he found 15
 To sing her glories, and to paint her fair!

E L E G I E S.

Ill was he skill'd to guide his wand'ring sheep,
And unforeseen disaster thinn'd his fold;
Yet at another's loss the swain would weep,
And for his friend his very crook was fold.

Ye sons of Wealth! protect the Muse's train;
From winds protect them, and with food supply;
Ah! helpless they, to ward the threaten'd pain,
'The meagre famine, and the wintry sky!

He lov'd a nymph; amidst his slender store
He dar'd to love; and Cynthia was his theme;
He breath'd his plaints along the rocky shore,
They only echo'd o'er the winding stream.

His nymph was fair! the sweetest bud that blows
Revives less lovely from the recent show'r;
So Philomel enamour'd eyes the rose;
Sweet bird! enamour'd of the sweetest flow'r.

He lov'd the Muse; she taught him to complain;
He saw his tim'rous loves on her depend:
He lov'd the Muse, altho' she taught in vain;
He lov'd the Muse, for she was Virtue's friend.

She guides the foot that treads on Parian floors;
She wins the ear when formal pleas are vain;
She tempts Patricians from the fatal doors
Of Vice's brothel forth to Virtue's fane.

He wish'd for wealth, for much he wish'd to give;
He griev'd that virtue might not wealth obtain:
Piteous of woes, and hopeless to relieve,
'The pensive prospect sadden'd all his strain.

I saw him faint! I saw him sink to rest!
Like one ordain'd to swell the vulgar throng;
As tho' the Virtues had not warm'd his breast,
As tho' the Muses not inspir'd his tongue.

I saw his hier ignobly cross the plain;
Saw peasant hands the pious rite supply:

The gen'rous rustics mourn'd the friendly swain,
 But Power and Wealth's unvarying cheek was dry!
 Such Alcon fell; in meagre want forlorn!
 Where were ye then, ye pow'ful Patrons! where?
 Would ye the purple should your limbs adorn,
 Go wash the conscious blemish with a tear. 56

E L E G Y IV.

Ophelia's Urn. To Mr. G ———.

THRO' the dim veil of ev'ning's dusky shade,
 Near some lone fane, or yew's funereal green,
 What dreary forms has magic Fear survey'd!
 What shrouded spectres Superstition seen!

But you, secure, shall pour your sad complaint, 5
 Nor dread the meagre phantom's wan array;
 What none but Fear's officious hand can paint,
 What none but Superstition's eye survey.

The glimm'ring twilight and the doubtful dawn
 Shall see your step to these sad scenes return: 10
 Constant, as crystal dew's impearl the lawn,
 Shall Strephon's tear bedew Ophelia's urn.

Sure nought unhallow'd shall presume to stray
 Where sleep the reliques of that virtuous maid;
 Nor aught unlovely bend its devious way 15
 Where soft Ophelia's dear remains are laid.

Haply thy Muse, as with unceasing sighs
 She keeps late vigils on her urn reclin'd,
 May see light groups of pleasing visions rise,
 And phantoms glide, but of celestial kind. 20

Then Fame, her clarion pendant at her side,
 Shall seek forgiveness of Ophelia's shade;
 "Why has such worth, without distinction, dy'd?
 Why, like the desert's lily, bloom'd to fade?"

Then young Simplicity, averse to feign,
 Shall, unmolested, breathe her softest sigh,
 And Candour with unwonted warmth complain,
 And Innocence indulge a wailful cry.

Then Elegance, with coy judicious hand,
 Shall cull fresh flowers for Ophelia's tomb;
 And Beauty chide the Fates' severe command,
 That shew'd the frailty of so fair a bloom!

And Fancy then, with wild ungovern'd woe,
 Shall her lov'd pupil's native taste explain;
 For mournful fable all her hues forego,
 And ask sweet solace of the Muse in vain!

Ah! gentle Forms! expect no fond relief;
 Too much the sacred Nine their loss deplore:
 Well may ye grieve, nor find an end of grief—
 Your best, your brightest, fav'rite is no more.

E L E G Y V.

He compares the turbulence of love with the tranquillity of friendship. To Melissa his friend.

FROM Love, from angry Love's inclement reign
 I pass a while to Friendship's equal skies;
 Thou, gen'rous Maid; reliev'st my partial pain,
 And cheer'st the victim of another's eyes.

'Tis thou, Melissa, thou deserv'st my care;
 How can my will and reason disagree?
 How can my passion live beneath despair?
 How can my bosom sigh for aught but thee?

Ah! dear Melissa! pleas'd with thee to rove,
 My soul has yet surviv'd its dreariest time;
 Ill can I bear the various clime of Love!
 Love is a pleasing but a various clime.

So smiles immortal Maro's fav'rite shore.
 Parthenope, with ev'ry verdure crown'd;
 When straight Vesuvio's horrid chaldrons roar, 15
 And the dry vapour blast the regions round.

Oh! blissful regions! oh! unrivall'd plains!
 When Maro to these fragrant haunts retir'd!
 Oh! fatal realms! and, oh! accurs'd domains!
 When Pliny 'mid sulphureous clouds expir'd! 20

So smiles the surface of the treach'rous main,
 As o'er its waves the peaceful halcyons play,
 When soon rude winds their wonted rule regain,
 And sky and ocean mingle in the fray.

But let or air contend or ocean rave; 25
 Ev'n Hope subside, amid the billows tost;
 Hope, still emergent, still contemns the wave,
 And not a feature's wonted smile is lost. 28

E L E G Y VI.

To a Lady, on the Language of Birds.

COME then, Dione, let us range the grove,
 The science of the feather'd choirs explore,
 Hear linnets argue, larks descant of love,
 And blame the gloom of solitude no more.

My doubt subsides—'tis no Italian song, 5
 Nor senseless ditty, cheers the vernal tree:
 Ah! who that hears Dione's tuneful tongue
 Shall doubt that music may with sense agree?

And come, my Muse! that lov'st the sylvan shade,
 Evolve the mazes, and the mist dispel: 10
 Translate the song; convince my doubting maid
 No solemn dervise can explain so well.——

Penſive beneath the twilight ſhades I fate,
 'The ſlave of hopeleſs vows and cold diſdain!
 When Philomel addreſs'd his mournful mate, 15
 And thus I conſtru'd the mellifluous ſtrain.

“ Sing on, my bird!—the liquid notes prolong,
 “ At ev'ry note a lover ſheds his tear;
 “ Sing on, my bird!—'tis Damon hears thy ſong,
 “ Nor doubt to gain applauſe when lovers hear. 20
 “ He the ſad ſource of our complaining knows,
 “ A foe to Tereus and to lawleſs love!
 “ He mourns the ſtory of our ancient woes;
 “ Ah! could our muſic his complaint remove!
 “ Yon' plains are govern'd by a peerleſs maid; 25
 “ And ſee! pale Cynthia mounts the vaulted ſky,
 “ A train of lovers court the chequer'd ſhade;
 “ Sing on, my bird! and hear thy mates reply.
 “ Erewhile no ſhepherd to theſe woods retir'd,
 “ No lover bleſs'd the glow-worm's pallid ray; 30
 “ But ill-ſtar'd birds that, liſt'ning, not admir'd,
 “ Or liſt'ning, envy'd our ſuperior lay.
 “ Cheer'd by the ſun, the vaffals of his pow'r,
 “ Let ſuch by day unite their jarring ſtrains,
 “ But let us chuſe the calm, the ſilent, hour,
 “ Nor want fit audience while Dione reigns.” 35

E L E G Y VII.

He describes his Vision to an Acquaintance.

Cætera per terras omnes animalia, &c. VIRG.

IMITATION.

All animals beside, o'er all the earth, &c.

ON distant heaths, beneath autumnal skies,
 Pensive I saw the circling shade descend;
 Weary and faint I heard the storm arise,
 While the sun vanish'd like a faithless friend.
 No kind companion led my steps aright;
 No friendly planet lent its glimm'ring ray;
 Ev'n the lone cot refus'd its wonted light,
 Where Toil in peaceful slumber clos'd the day.
 Then the dull bell had giv'n a pleasing sound;
 The village cur 'twere transport then to hear; 10
 In dreadful silence all was hush'd around,
 While the rude storm alone distress'd mine ear.
 As led by Orwell's winding banks I stray'd,
 Where tow'ring Wolfey breath'd his native air,
 A sudden lustre chas'd the flitting shade, 15
 The sounding winds were hush'd, and all was fair.
 Instant a grateful form appear'd confess;
 White were his locks, with awful scarlet crown'd,
 And livelier far than Tyrian seem'd his vest,
 That with the glowing purple ting'd the ground. 20
 "Stranger!" he said, "amid this pealing rain,
 Benighted, lonesome, whither wouldst thou stray?
 Does wealth or pow'r thy weary step constrain?
 Reveal thy wish, and let me point the way.

For know, I trod the trophy'd paths of pow'r, 25
Felt ev'ry joy that fair Ambition brings,
And left the lonely roof of yonder bow'r
To stand beneath the canopies of kings.

I bade low hinds the tow'ring ardour share,
Nor meanly rose to bless myself alone; 30
I snatch'd the shepherd from his fleecy care,
And bade his wholesome dictate guard the throne.

Low at my feet the suppliant peer I saw;
I saw proud empires my decision wait;
My will was duty, and my word was law, 35
My smile was transport, and my frown was fate."

Ah me! said I, nor pow'r I seek, nor gain;
Nor urg'd by hope of fame these toils endure;
A simple youth, that feels a lover's pain,
And from his friend's condolence hopes a cure. 40

He, the dear youth! to whose abodes I roam,
Nor can mine honours nor my fields extend;
Yet for his sake I leave my distant home,
Which oaks embosom, and which hills defend.

Beneath that home I scorn the wintry wind; 45
The Spring, to shade me, robes her fairest tree;
And if a friend my grass-grown threshold find,
O how my lonely cot resounds with glee!

Yet, tho' averse to gold in heaps amass'd,
I wish to bless, I languish to bestow; 50
And tho' no friend to Fame's obstrep'rous blast,
Still to her dulcet murmurs not a foe.

Too proud with servile tone to deign address;
Too mean to think that honours are my due;
Yet should some patron yield my stores to bless, 55
I sure shall deem my boundless thanks were few.

But tell me, thou! that like a meteor's fire
Shott'st blazing forth, disdaining dull degrees,
Should I to wealth, to fame, to pow'r, aspire,
Must I not pass more rugged paths than these? 60

Must I not groan beneath a guilty load,
 Praise him I scorn, and him I love betray?
 Does not felonious Envy bar the road?
 Or Falsehood's treach'rous foot beset the way?
 Nay, should I pass thro' Favour's crowded gate, 65
 Must not fair Truth inglorious wait behind?
 Whilst I approach the glitt'ring scenes of state,
 My best companion no admittance find?
 Nurs'd in the shades by Freedom's lenient care,
 Shall I the rigid sway of Fortune own? 70
 Taught by the voice of pious Truth, prepare
 To spurn an altar, and adore a throne?
 And when proud Fortune's ebbing tide recedes,
 And when it leaves me no unshaken friend,
 Shall I not weep that e'er I left the meads, 75
 Which oaks embosom, and which hills defend?
 Oh! if these ills the price of pow'r advance,
 Check not my speed where social joys invite!
 The troubled vision cast a mournful glance,
 And, sighing, vanish'd in the shades of night. 80

E L E G Y VIII.

He describes his early Love of Poetry, and its
 Consequences. To Mr. G——, 1745*.

AH me! what envious magic thins my fold?
 What mutter'd spell retards their late increase?
 Much less'ning fleeces must the swain behold,
 That e'er with Doric pipe essays to please.
 Saw my friends in ev'ning circles meet; 85
 Took my vocal reed, and tun'd my lay;
 Heard them say my vocal reed was sweet:
 Ah, fool! to credit what I heard them say.

* N. B. Written after the death of Mr. Pope.

Ill-fated Bard ! that seeks his skill to show,
 Then courts the judgment of a friendly ear;
 Not the poor vet'ran, that permits his foe
 To guide his doubtful step, has more to fear,
 Nor could my G—— mistake the critic's laws,
 Till pious Friendship mark'd the pleasing way:
 Welcome such error ! ever bless'd the cause !
 Ev'n tho' it led me boundless leagues astray.

Couldst thou reprove me, when I nurs'd the flame
 On list'ning Cherwell's oſier banks reclin'd?
 While foe to Fortune, unſeduc'd by Fame,
 I ſooth'd the bias of a careleſs mind.

Youth's gentle kindred, Health and Love, were met
 What tho' in Alma's guardian arms I play'd?
 How ſhall the Muſe thoſe vacant hours forget ?
 Or deem that bliſs by ſolid cares repaid?

Thou know'ſt how transport thrills the tender breaſt
 Where Love and Fancy fix their op'ning reign;
 How Nature ſhines, in livelier colours dreſt,
 To bleſs their union, and to grace their train.

So firſt when Phœbus met the Cyprian queen,
 And favour'd Rhodes beheld their paſſion crown'd
 Unuſual flow'rs enrich'd the painted green,
 And ſwift ſpontaneous roſes bluſh'd around.

Now ſadly lorn, from Twitnam's widow'd bow'r
 The drooping Muſes take their caſual way,
 And where they ſtop a flood of tears they pour,
 And where they weep no more the fields are gay.

Where is the dappled pink, the ſprightly roſe ?
 The cowſlip's golden cup no more I ſee :
 Dark and diſcolour'd ev'ry flow'r that blows,
 To form the garland, Elegy ! for thee—

Enough of tears has wept the virtuous dead ;
 Ah ! might we now the pious rage control !
 Huſh'd be my grief ere ev'ry ſmile be fled,
 Ere the deep-ſwelling ſigh ſubvert the ſoul !

E L E G I E S.

77

If near some trophy spring a stripling bay,
Pleas'd we behold the graceful umbrage rise,
But soon too deep it works its baneful way,
And low on earth the prostrate ruin lies*.

45

48

E L E G Y IX.

He describes his disinterestedness to a friend.

I NE'ER must tinge my lip with Celtic wines;
The pomp of India must I ne'er display;
Nor boast the produce of Peruvian mines,
Nor with Italian sounds deceive the day.
Down yonder brook my crystal bev'rage flows; 5
My grateful sheep their annual fleeces bring;
Fair in my garden buds the damask rose,
And from my grove I hear the throstle sing.
My fellow swains! avert your dazzled eyes;
In vain allur'd by glitt'ring spoils they rove; 10
The Fates ne'er meant them for the shepherd's prize,
Yet gave them ample recompense in love.
They gave you vigour from your parents' veins;
They gave you toils; but toils your sinews brace;
They gave you nymphs that own their am'rous
pains,
And shades, the refuge of the gentle race. 16
To carve your loves, to paint your mutual flames,
See! polish'd fair, the beech's friendly rind!
To sing soft carols to your lovely dames,
See! vocal grots, and echoing vales assign'd! 20

* Alludes to what is reported of the bay-tree,
that if it is planted too near the walls of an ed-
ifice, its roots will work their way underneath,
till they destroy the foundation.

Wouldst thou my Strephon ! Love's delighted slave
 Tho' sure the wreaths of chivalry to share,
 Forego the ribbon thy Matilda gave,
 And giving, bade thee in remembrance wear ?

Ill fare my peace, but ev'ry idle toy,
 If to my mind my Delia's form it brings,
 Has truer worth, imparts sincerer joy,
 Than all that bears the radiant stamp of kings.

O my soul weeps, my breast with anguish bleeds,
 When Love deplores the tyrant pow'r of Gain !
 Disdaining riches as the futile weeds,
 I rise superior, and the rich disdain.

Oft' from the stream, slow-wand'ring down the
 glade,

Pensive I hear the nuptial peal rebound;
 " Some miser weds," I cry, " The captive maid,
 And some fond lover sickens at the sound."

Not Somerville, the Muse's friend of old,
 Tho' now exalted to yon' ambient sky,
 So shunn'd a soul disdain'd with earth and gold,
 So lov'd the pure, the gen'rous breast, as I.

Scorn'd be the wretch that quits his genial bowl,
 His loves, his friendship, ev'n his self, resigns ;
 Perverts the sacred instinct of his soul,
 And to a ducat's dirty sphere confines.

But come, my Friend ! with taste, with science
 Ere age impair me, and ere gold allure ; [blest
 Restore thy dear idea to my breast,
 The rich deposit shall the shrine secure.

Let others toil to gain the sordid ore,
 The charms of independence let us sing ;
 Bless'd with thy friendship, can I wish for more ?
 I'll spurn the boasted wealth of Lydia's king*.

* Cræsus.

E L E G Y X.

To Fortune, suggesting his motive for repining at
her dispensations.

ASK not the cause why this rebellious tongue
Loads with fresh curses thy detested sway;
Ask not, thus branded in my softest song,
Why stands the flatter'd name which all obey?

'Tis not that in my shed I lurk forlorn, 5
Not see my roof on Parian columns rise;
That on this breast no mimic star is borne,
Rever'd, ah! more than those that light the skies.

'Tis not that on the turf supinely laid,
I sing or pipe, but to the flocks that graze; 10
And, all inglorious, in the lonesome shade
My finger it stiffens, and my voice decays.

Not that my fancy mourns thy stern command,
When many an embryo dome is lost in air; 14
While guardian Prudence checks my eager hand,
And ere the turf is broken, cries, "Forbear:

"Forbear, vain Youth! be cautious, weigh thy
Nor let yon' rising column more aspire; [gold,
Ah! better dwell in ruins than behold 19
Thy fortunes moul'dring, and thy domes entire.

Honorio built, but dar'd my laws defy;
He planted, scornful of my sage commands;
The peach's vernal bud regal'd his eye,
The fruitage ripen'd for more frugal hands." 24

See the small stream that pours its murm'ring tide
O'er some rough rock that would its wealth display,
Displays it aught but penury and pride?
Ah! construe wisely what such murmurs say.

How would some flood, with ampler treasures blest,
 Disdainful view the scantling drops distil! 30
 How must Velino* shake his reedy crest!
 How ev'ry cygnet mock the boastive rill

Fortune! I yield; and see, I give the sign;
 At noon the poor mechanic wanders home,
 Collects the square, the level, and the line, 35
 And with retorted eye forsakes the dome.

Yes, I can patient view the shadeless plains;
 Can unrepining leave the rising wall;
 Check the fond love of art that fir'd my veins,
 And my warm hopes in full pursuit recall. 40

Descend, ye Storms! destroy my rising pile;
 Loos'd be the whirlwind's unremitting sway;
 Contented I, altho' the gazer smile
 To see it scarce survive a winter's day.

Let some dull dotard bask in thy gay shrine, 45
 As in the sun regales his wanton herd;
 Guiltless of envy, why should I repine
 That his rude voice, his grating reed's, preferr'd?

Let him exult, with boundless wealth supply'd,
 Mine and the swain's reluctant homage share; 50
 But, ah! his tawdry shepherdess's pride,
 Gods! must my Delia, must my Delia, bear?

Must Delia's softness, elegance, and ease,
 Submit to Marian's dress? to Marian's gold?
 Must Marian's robe from distant India please? 55
 The simple fleece my Delia's limbs enfold?

"Yet sure on Delia seems the russet fair;
 Ye glitt'ring daughters of Disguise, adieu!"
 So talk the wise, who judge of shape and air,
 But will the rural thane decide so true? 60

* A river in Italy, that falls 100 yards perpendicular.

Ah ! what is native worth esteem'd of clowns ?
 'Tis thy false glare, O Fortune ! thine they see ;
 'Tis for my Delia's sake I dread thy frowns,
 And my last gasp shall curses breathe on thee. 64

E L E G Y XI.

He complains how soon the pleasing novelty of life
 is over. To Mr. J——.

A H me ! my Friend ! it will not, will not last !
 This fairy scene that cheats our youthful eyes ;
 The charm dissolves ; th' ærial music's past ;
 The banquet ceases, and the vision flies.

Where are the splendid forms, the rich perfumes, 5
 Where the gay tapers, where the spacious dome ?
 Vanish'd the costly pearls, the crimson plumes,
 And we, delightful, left to wander home !

Vain now are books, the sage's wisdom vain !
 What has the world to bribe our steps astray ? 10
 Ere Reason learns by study'd laws to reign,
 The weaken'd passions, self-subdu'd, obey.

Scarce has the sun sev'n annual courses roll'd,
 Scarce shewn the whole that Fortune can supply,
 Since not the miser so carefs'd his gold 15
 As I, for what it gave, was heard to sigh.

On the world's stage I wish'd some sprightly part,
 To deck my native fleece with tawdry lace !
 'Twas life, 'twas taste, and—oh ! my foolish heart !
 Substantial joy was fix'd in pow'r and place. 20

And you, ye works of Art ! allur'd mine eye,
 The breathing picture and the living stone :
 " Tho' gold, tho' splendour, Heav'n and Fate deny,
 " Yet might I call one Titian stroke my own !"

Smit with the charms of Fame, whose lovely spoils
 The wreath, the garland, fire the poet's pride, 26
 I trimm'd my lamp, consum'd the midnight oil—
 But soon the paths of health and fame divide!

Oft', too, I pray'd, 'twas Nature form'd the pray'r,
 To grace my native scenes, my rural home; 30
 To see my trees express their planter's care,
 And gay, on Attic models, raise my dome.

But now 'tis o'er, the dear delusion's o'er!
 A stagnant breezeless air becalms my soul;
 A fond aspiring candidate no more, 35
 I scorn the palm before I reach the goal.

O Youth! enchanting stage, profusely blest'd!
 Bliss ev'n obtrusive courts the frolic mind;
 Of health neglectful, yet by health caress'd,
 Careless of favour, yet secure to find. 40

Then glows the breast, as op'ning roses fair;
 More free, more vivid, than the linnet's wing;
 Honest as light, transparent ev'n as air,
 Tender as buds, and lavish as the spring.

Not all the force of manhood's active might, 45
 Not all the craft to subtle age assign'd,
 Not science shall extort that dear delight,
 Which gay delusion gave the tender mind.

Adieu, soft raptures! transports void of care!
 Parent of raptures, dear Deceit! adieu; 50
 And you, her daughters, pining with despair,
 Why, why so soon her fleeting steps pursue!

Tedious again to curse the drizzling day!
 Again to trace the wint'ry tracts of snow!
 Or, sooth'd by vernal airs, again survey 55
 The self-same hawthorns bud, and cowslips blow!

O Life! how soon of ev'ry bliss forlorn!
 We start false joys, and urge the devious race;
 A tender prey; that cheers our youthful morn,
 Then sinks untimely, and defrauds the chase. 60

ELEGIES.

ELEGY XII.

His recantation.

NO more the Muse obtrudes her thin disguise,
No more with awkward fallacy complains
How ev'ry fervour from my bosom flies,
And Reason in her lonesome palace reigns.

Ere the chill winter of our days arrive, 5
No more she paints the breast from passion free;
I feel, I feel one loit'ring wish survive—
Ah! need I, Florio, name that wish to thee?

The star of Venus ushers in the day,
The first, the loveliest of the train that shine! 10
The star of Venus lends her brightest ray,
When other stars their friendly beams resign.

Still in my breast one soft desire remains,
Pure as that star, from guilt, from int'rest free;
Has gentle Delia tripp'd across the plains, 15
And deed I, Florio, name that wish to thee?

While, cloy'd to find the scenes of life the same,
I tune with careless hand my languid lays,
Some secret impulse wakes my former flame,
And fires my strain with hopes of brighter days.

I slept not long beneath yon' rural bow'rs,
And, lo! my crook with flow'rs adorn'd I see;
Has gentle Delia bound my crook with flow'rs,
And need I, Florio, name my hopes to thee? 24

Smit with the charms of Fame, whose lovely spoil
 The wreath, the garland, fire the poet's pride, 26
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And Reason in her lonesome palace reigns.

Ere the chill winter of our days arrive, 5
No more she paints the breast from passion free;
I feel, I feel one loit'ring wish survive—
Ah! need I, Florio, name that wish to thee?

The star of Venus ushers in the day,
The first, the loveliest of the train that shine! 10
The star of Venus lends her brightest ray,
When other stars their friendly beams resign.

Still in my breast one soft desire remains,
Pure as that star, from guilt, from int'rest free;
Has gentle Delia tripp'd across the plains, 15
And deed I, Florio, name that wish to thee?

While, cloy'd to find the scenes of life the same,
I tune with careless hand my languid lays,
Some secret impulse wakes my former flame,
And fires my strain with hopes of brighter days.

I slept not long beneath yon' rural bow'rs,
And, lo! my crook with flow'rs adorn'd I see;
Has gentle Delia bound my crook with flow'rs,
And need I, Florio, name my hopes to thee? 24

E L E G Y XIII.

To a friend, on some slight occasion estranged from him.

HEALTH to my friend, and many a cheerful day!

Around his seat may peaceful shades abide!
Smooth flow the minutes, fraught with smiles, away,
And till they crown our union gently glide!

Ah me! too swift'y fleets our vernal bloom! 5
Lost to our wonted friendship, lost to joy!
Soon may thy breast the cordial wish resume,
Ere wintry doubt its tender warmth destroy!

Say, were it ours, by Fortune's wild command,
By chance to meet beneath the Torrid Zone, 10
Wouldst thou reject thy Damon's plighted hand?
Wouldst thou with scorn thy once-lov'd friend dis-
own?

Life is that stranger land, that alien clime;
Shall kindred souls forego their social claim!
Launch'd in the vast abyss of space and time, 15
Shall dark suspicion quench the gen'rous flame?

Myriads of souls, that knew one parent mould,
See sadly sever'd by the laws of Chance!
Myriads, in Time's perennial list enroll'd,
Forbid by Fate to change one transient glance! 20

But we have met—where ills of ev'ry form,
Where passions rage, and hurricanes descend;
Say, shall we nurse the rage, assist the storm,
And guide them to the bosom—of a friend?

Yes, we have met—thro' rapine, fraud, and wrong:
Might our joint aid the paths of peace explore! 26
Why leave thy friend amid the boist'rous throng,
Ere death divide us, and we part no more?

For, oh ! pale Sickness warns thy friend away ;
 For me no more the vernal roses bloom ! 30
 I see stern Fate his ebon wand display,
 And point the wither'd regions of the tomb.
 Then the keen anguish from thine eye shall start,
 Sad as thou follow'st my untimely bier ;
 " Fool that I was—if friends so soon must part,
 " To let suspicion intermix a fear." 36

E L E G Y XIV.

Declining an invitation to visit foreign countries,
 he takes occasion to intimate the advantages of
 his own. To Lord Temple.

WHILE others, lost to friendship, lost to love,
 Waste their best minutes on a foreign strand,
 Be mine with British nymph or swain to rove,
 And court the Genius of my native land.
 Deluded Youth ! that quits these verdant plains, 5
 To catch the follies of an alien soil !
 To win the vice his genuine soul disdains,
 Return exultant, and import the spoil !
 In vain he boasts of his detested prize ;
 No more it blooms, to British climes convey'd ; 10
 Cramp'd by the impulse of ungenial skies,
 See its fresh vigour in a moment fade !
 Th' exotic folly knows its native clime,
 An awkward stranger, if we waft it o'er ;
 Why then these toils, this costly waste of time, 15
 To spread soft poison on our happy shore ?
 I covet not the pride of foreign looms ;
 In search of foreign modes I scorn to rove ;
 Nor for the worthless bird of brighter plumes
 Would change the meanest warbler of my grove. 20

No distant clime shall servile airs impart,
 Or form these limbs with pliant ease to play;
 Trembling I view the Gaul's illusive art
 That steals my lov'd rusticity away.

'Tis long since Freedom fled the Hesperian clime, 25
 Her citron groves, her flow'r-embroider'd shore;
 She saw the British oak aspire sublime,
 And soft Campania's olive charms no more.

Let partial suns mature the western mine,
 To shed its lustre o'er th' Iberian maid;
 Mien, beauty, shape, O native soil! are thine;
 Thy peerless daughters ask no foreign aid.

Let Ceylon's envy'd plant * perfume the seas,
 Till torn to season the Batavian bowl;
 Ours is the breast whose genuine ardours please, 35
 Nor need a drug to meliorate the soul.

Let the proud Soldan wound th' Arcadian groves
 Or with rude lips th' Aonian fount profane;
 The Muse no more by flow'ry Ladon roves
 She seeks her Thomson on the British plain. 40

Tell not of realms by ruthless war dismay'd;
 Ah! hapless realms! that war's oppression feel!
 In vain may Austria boast her Noric blade,
 If Austria bleed beneath her boasted steel.

Beneath her palm Idume vents her moan; 45
 Raptur'd, she once beheld its friendly shade;
 And hoary Memphis boasts her tombs alone,
 The mournful types of mighty pow'r decay'd!

No Crescent here displays its baneful horns;
 No turban'd host the voice of Truth reproves; 50
 Learning's free source the sage's breast adorns,
 And poets, not inglorious, chant their loves.

* The cinnamon.

Boast, favour'd Media ! boast thy flow'ry stores ;
 Thy thousand hues by chymic suns refin'd ;
 'Tis not the dress or mien my soul adores, 55
 'Tis the rich beauties of Britannia's mind.

While Grenville's * breast could virtue's stores afford,
 What envy'd flota bore so fair a freight ?
 The mine compar'd in vain its latent hoard,
 The gem its lustre, and the gold its weight. 60

Thee, Grenville ! thee, with calmest courage fraught !
 Thee, the lov'd image of thy native shore !
 Thee, by the Virtues arm'd, the Graces taught !
 When shall we cease to boast or to deplore ?

Presumptuous War, which could thy life destroy,
 What shall it now in recompense decree ? 66
 While friends that merit ev'ry earthly joy
 Feel ev'ry anguish ; feel—the loss of thee !

Bid me no more a servile realm compare,
 No more the Muse of partial praise arraign ; 70
 Britannia sees no foreign breast so fair,
 And if she glory, glories not in vain. 72

E L E G Y XV.

In memory of a private family † in Worcestershire.

FROM a lone tower with rev'rend Ivy crown'd,
 The pealing bell awak'd a tender sigh ;
 Still as the village caught the waving sound,
 A swelling tear distream'd from ev'ry eye.

* Written about the time of Captain Grenville's death.

† The Penns of Harborough ; a place whose name in the Saxon language alludes to an army : and there is a tradition that there was a battle fought on the Downs adjoining, betwixt the Britons and the Romans.

So droop'd, I ween, each Briton's breast of old, 5
 When the dull curfew spoke their freedom fled;
 For, sighing as the mournful accent roll'd,
 "Our hope," they cry'd, "our kind support is
 dead!"

'Twas good Palemon!—Near a shaded pool,
 A group of ancient elms umbrageous rose; 10
 The flocking rooks, by instinct's native rule,
 This peaceful scene for their asylum chose.

A few small spires, to Gothic fancy fair,
 Amid the shades emerging struck the view;
 'Twas here his youth respir'd its earliest air; 15
 'Twas here his age breath'd out its last adieu.

One favour'd son engag'd his tend'rest care;
 One pious youth his whole affection crown'd;
 In his young breast the virtues sprung so fair,
 Such charms display'd, such sweets diffus'd around,

But whilst gay transport in his face appears, 21
 A noxious vapour clogs the poison'd sky,
 Blasts the fair crop—the fire is drown'd in tears,
 And, scarce surviving, sees his Cynthio die!

O'er the pale corse we saw him gently bend; 25
 Heart-chill'd with grief—"My thread," he cry'd,
 "is spun!"

If Heaven had meant I should my life extend,
 Heaven had preserv'd my life's support, my son.

Snatch'd in thy prime! alas! the stroke were mild,
 Had my frail form obey'd the Fate's decree! 30
 Bless'd were my lot, O Cynthio! O my child!
 Had Heav'n so pleas'd, and I had dy'd for thee."

Five sleepless nights he stemm'd this tide of woes;
 Five irksome suns he saw, thro' tears, forlorn!
 On his pale corse the sixth sad morning rose: 35
 From yonder dome the mournful bier was borne.

'Twas on those * Downs, by Roman hosts annoy'd,
Fought our bold fathers, rustic, unrefin'd !
Freedom's plain sons, in martial cares employ'd !
They ting'd their bodies, but unmask'd their
mind. 40

'Twas there, in happier times, this virtuous race
Of milder merit, fix'd their calm retreat ;
War's deadly crimson had forsook the place,
And Freedom fondly lov'd the chosen seat.

No wild ambition fir'd their tranquil breast, 43
To swell with empty sounds a spotless name ;
If soft'ring skies, the sun, the snow'r, were blest,
Their bounty spread, their fields' extent the same.

Those fields, profuse of raiment, food, and fire,
They scorn'd to lessen, careless to extend ; 50
Bade Luxury to lavish courts aspire
And Avarice to city breasts descend.

None to a virgin's mind preferr'd her dow'r,
To fire with vicious hopes a modest heir :
The fire, in place of titles, wealth, or pow'r, 55
Assign'd him virtue ; and his lot was fair.

They spoke of Fortune as some doubtful dame,
That sway'd the natives of a distant sphere ;
From Lucre's vagrant sons had learn'd her name,
But never wish'd to place her banners here. 60

Here youth's free spirit, innocently gay,
Enjoy'd the most that Innocence can give ;
Those wholesome sweets that border Virtue's way ;
Those cooling fruits, that we may taste and live.

Their board no strange ambiguous viand bore ; 65
From their own streams their choicer fare they
drew ;

To lure the scaly glutton to the shore,
The sole deceit their artless bosom knew !

* Harborough Downs.

Sincere themselves, ah ! too secure to find
 The common bosom, like their own sincere !
 'Tis its own guilt alarms the jealous mind ;
 'Tis her own poison bids the viper fear.

70

Sketch'd on the lattice of th' adjacent fane,
 Their suppliant busts implore the reader's pray'r:
 Ah ! gentle souls ! enjoy your blisful reign,
 And let frail mortals claim your guardian care.

75

For sure to blisful realms the souls are flown
 That never flatter'd, injur'd, censur'd, strove ;
 The friends of Science ! music all their own ;
 Music, the voice of Virtue and of Love !

80

The journeying peasant, thro' the secret shade
 Heard their soft lyres engage his list'ning ear,
 And haply deem'd some courteous angel play'd ;
 No angel play'd—but might with transport hear.

For these the sounds that chase unholy strife !
 Solve Envy's charm, Ambition's wretch release !
 Raise him to spurn the radiant ills of life,
 To pity pomp, to be content with peace.

85

Farewell, pure Spirits ! vain the praise we give,
 The praise you sought from lips angelic flows ;
 Farewell ! the virtues which deserve to live
 Deserve an ampler bliss than life bestows.

90

Last of his race, Palemon, now no more
 The modest merit of his line display'd ;
 Then pious Hough Vigornia's mitre wore—
 Soft sleep the dust of each deserving shade.

96

E L E G Y XVI.

He suggests the advantages of birth to a person of merit, and the folly of a superciliousness that is built upon that sole foundation.

WHEN genius, grac'd with lineal splendour,
glows,

When title shines, with ambient virtues crown'd,
Like some fair almond's flow'ry pomp it shows,
The pride, the perfume, of the regions round.

Then learn, ye Fair! to soften splendour's ray; 5
Endure the swain, the youth of low degree;
Let meekness join'd its temp'rate beam display;
'Tis the mild verdure that endears the tree.

Pity the scandal'd swain, the shepherd's boy;
He sighs to brighten a neglected name; 10
Foe to the dull impulse of vulgar joy,
He mourns his lot; he wishes, merits fame.

In vain to groves and pathless vales we fly;
Ambition there the bow'ry haunt invades;
Fame's awful rays fatigue the courtier's eye, 15
But gleam still lovely thro' the chequer'd shades.

Vainly to guard from Love's unequal chain,
Has Fortune rear'd us in the rural grove;
Should ****'s eyes illumine the desert plain,
Ev'n I may wonder, and ev'n I must love. 20

Nor unregarded sighs the lowly hind;
Tho' you contemn, the gods respect his vow;
Vindictive rage awaits the scornful mind,
And vengeance, too severe! the gods allow.

On Sarum's plain I met a wand'ring fair; 25
The look of sorrow, lovely still, she bore;
Loose flow'd the soft redundancy of her hair,
And on her brow a flow'ry wreath she wore.

Oft' stooping as she stray'd, she cull'd the pride
Of ev'ry plain; she pillag'd ev'ry grove! 30
The fading chaplet daily she supply'd,
And still her hand some various garland wove.

Erroneous Fancy shap'd her wild attire;
From Bethlem's walls the poor lymptic stray'd;
Seem'd with her air her accent to conspire, 35
When as wild Fancy taught her, thus she said:

"Hear me, dear Youth! oh! hear an hapless maid,
Sprung from the sceptred line of ancient kings!
Scorn'd by the world, I ask thy tender aid;
Thy gentle voice shall whisper kinder things. 40

The world is frantic—fly the race profane—
Nor I nor you shall its compassion move;
Come, friendly let us wander and complain,
And tell me, Shepherd! hast thou seen my love?

My love is young—but other loves are young; 45
And other loves are fair, and so is mine;
An air divine discloses whence he sprung;
He is my love who boasts that air divine.

No vulgar Damon robs me of my rest;
Ianthe listens to no vulgar vow; 50
A prince, from gods descended, fires her breast;
A brilliant crown distinguishes his brow.

What, shall I stain the glories of my race,
More clear, more lovely bright, than Hesper's beam?
The porcelain pure with vulgar dirt debase? 55
Or mix with puddle the pellucid stream?

See thro' these veins the sapphire current shine!
'Twas Jove's own nectar gave th' ethereal hue:
Can base plebeian forms contend with mine,
Display the lovely white, or match the blue? 60

The painter strove to trace its azure ray;
He chang'd his colours, and in vain he strove:

He frown'd—I, smiling, view'd the faint essay:
Poor youth! he little knew it flow'd from Jove.

Pitying his toil, the wond'rous truth I told, 65
How am'rous Jove trepann'd a mortal fair;
How thro' the race the gen'rous current roll'd,
And mocks the poet's art and painter's care.

Yes, from the gods, from earliest Saturn, sprung,
Our sacred race, thro' demigods convey'd, 70
And he, ally'd to Phœbus, ever young,
My godlike boy! must wed their duteous maid.

Oft' when a mortal vow profanes my ear,
My fire's dread fury murmurs thro' the sky:
And should I yield—his instant rage appears; 75
He darts th' uplifted vengeance—and I die.

Have you not heard unwonted thunders roll?
Have you not seen more horrid lightnings glare?
'Twas then a vulgar love ensnar'd my soul;
'Twas then—I hardly 'scap'd the fatal snare. 80

'Twas then a peasant pour'd his am'rous vow,
All as I listen'd to his vulgar strain;—
Yet such his beauty—would my birth allow,
Dear were the youth, and blissful were the plain.

But, oh! I faint! why wastes my vernal bloom, 85
In fruitless searches, ever doom'd to rove?
My nightly dreams the toilsome path resume,
And shall I die—before I find my love?

When last I slept, methought my ravish'd eye
On distant heaths his radiant form survey'd; 90
Tho' night's thick clouds encompass'd all the sky,
The gems that bound his brow dispell'd the shade.

O how this bosom kindled at the sight!
Led by their beams I urg'd the pleasing chase,
Till on a sudden these withheld their light— 95
All, all things envy the sublime embrace.

But now no more—Behind the distant grove
Wanders my destin'd youth, and chides my stay :
See, see! he grasps the steel—Forbear, my Love—
Ianthé comes ; thy princess hastes away.” 100

Scornful she spoke, and, heedless of reply,
The lovely maniac bounded o'er the plain,
The piteous victim of an angry sky !
Ah me ! the victim of her proud disdain. 104

E L E G Y XVII.

He indulges the suggestions of spleen : an Elegy
to the winds.

*Æole ! namque tibi divum Pater atque hominum rex,
Et mulcere dedit mentes et tollere vento.*

I M I T A T I O N.

O Æolus ! to thee the Sire supreme
Of gods and men the mighty pow'r bequeath'd
To rouse or to assuage the human mind.

STERN Monarch of the winds! admit my pray'r;
A while thy fury check, thy storms confine ;
No trivial blast impels the passive air,
But brews a tempest in a breast like mine.

What bands of black ideas spread their wings ! 5
The peaceful regions of Content invade !
With deadly poison taint the crystal springs !
With noisome vapour blast the verdant shade !

I know their leader, Spleen, and the dread sway
Of rigid Eurus, his detested fire :
Thro' one my blossoms and my fruits decay ;
Thro' one my pleasures and my hopes expire.

Like some pale stripling, when his icy way,
 Relenting, yields beneath the noontide beam,
 I stand aghast, and, chill'd with fear, survey 15
 How far I've tempted life's deceitful stream.

Where, by remorse impell'd, repuls'd by fears,
 Shall wretched Fancy a retreat explore?
 She flies the sad presage of coming years,
 And sorrowing dwells on pleasures now no more. 20

Again with patrons and with friends she roves,
 But friends and patrons never to return;
 She sees the Nymphs, the Graces, and the Loves,
 But sees them weeping o'er Lucinda's urn.

She visits, Isis! thy forsaken stream, 25
 Oh! ill forsaken for Boeotian air;
 She deems no flood reflects so bright a beam,
 No reed so verdant, and no flow'r so fair.

She deems beneath thy sacred shades were peace,
 Thy bays might ev'n the civil storm repel; 30
 Reviews thy social bliss, thy learned ease,
 And with no chearful accent cries Farewell!

Farewell, with whom to these retreats I stray'd,
 By youthful sports, by youthful toils, ally'd;
 Joyous we sojourn'd in thy circling shade, 35
 And wept to find the paths of life divide.

She paints the progress of my rival's vow,
 Sees ev'ry Muse a partial ear incline,
 Binds with luxuriant bays his favour'd brow,
 Nor yield the refuse of his wreath to mine. 40

She bids the flatt'ring mirror, form'd to please,
 Now blast my hope, now vindicate despair;
 Bids my fond verse the love-sick parley cease,
 Accuse my rigid fate, acquit my fair.

Where circling rocks defend some pathless vale, 45
 Superfluous mortal! let me ever rove;

Alas! there Echo will repeat the tale—
Where shall I find the silent scenes I love?

Fain would I mourn my luckless fate alone,
Forbid to please, yet fated to admire;
Away, my friends! my sorrows are my own;
Why should I breathe around my sick desire?

Bear me, ye winds! indulgent to my pains,
Near some sad ruin's ghastly shade to dwell,
There let me fondly eye the rude remains,
And from the mould'ring refuse build my cell.

Genius of Rome! thy prostrate pomp display,
Trace ev'ry dismal proof of Fortune's pow'r;
Let me the wreck of theatres survey,
Or pensive sit beneath some nodding tow'r.

Or where some duct, by rolling seasons worn,
Convey'd pure streams to Rome's imperial wall,
Near the wide breach in silence let me mourn,
Or tune my dirges to the water's fall.

Genius of Carthage! paint thy ruin'd pride;
Tow'rs, arches, fanes, in wild confusion strown;
Let banish'd Marius*, low'ring by thy side,
Compare thy fickle fortunes with his own.

Ah no! thou Monarch of the storms! forbear;
My trembling nerves abhor thy rude control,

“* Inopemque vitam in tugurio ruinarum Carthaginensium toleravit, cum Marius inspiciens Carthaginem, illa intuens Marium, alter alteri posset esse solatio.” *Liv.*

EXPLANATION.

Marius endured a life of poverty under shelter of the Carthaginian ruins; and while he contemplated Carthage, and Carthage beheld him, they might be said mutually to resemble and account for each other.

And scarce a pleasing twilight sooths my care,
 Ere one vast death, like darkness, shocks my soul.
 Forbear thy rage—on no perennial base
 Is built frail Fear, or Hope's deceitful pile ;
 My pains are fled—my joy resumes its place,
 Should the sky brighten, or Melissa smile.

76

E L E G Y XVIII.

He repeats the song of Colin, a discerning shepherd, lamenting the state of the woollen manufactory.

Ergo omni studio glaciem ventosque nivales,
 Quo minus est illis curæ mortalis egestas,
 Avertes : victumque feres.

VIRG.

I M I T A T I O N.

Thou, therefore, in proportion to their lack
 Of human aid, with all thy care defend
 From frozen seasons and inclement blasts,
 And give them timely food.

NEAR Avon's bank, on Arden's flow'ry plain,
 A tuneful shepherd * charm'd the list'ning
 And sunny Cotfol' fondly lov'd the strain, [wave,
 Yet not a garland crowns the shepherd's grave !

Oh ! lost Ophelia ! smoothly flow'd the day
 To feel his music with my flames agree,
 To taste the beauties of his melting lay,
 To taste, and fancy it was dear to thee.

When for his tomb, with each revolving year,
 I steal the musk-rose from the scented brake,
 I strew my cowslips, and I pay my tear,
 I'll add the myrtle for Ophelia's sake.

* Mr. Somerville.

Shiv'ring beneath a leafless thorn he lay, [tongues
When Death's chill rigour seiz'd his flowing
The more I found his falt'ring notes decay, 15
The more prophetic truths sublim'd the song.

"Adieu, my Flocks!" he said, "my wonted care
By sunny mountain or by verdant shore;

May some more happy hand your fold prepare,
And may you need your Colin's crook no more! 20

And you, ye Shepherds! lead my gentle sheep,
'To breezy hills or leafy shelters lead;
But if the sky with show'rs incessant weep,
Avoid the putrid moisture of the mead.

Where the wild thyme perfumes the purpled heath,
Long loit'ring, there your fleecy tribes extend—25
But what avails the maxims I bequeath?
The fruitless gift of an officious friend!

Ah! what avails the tim'rous lambs to guard,
Tho' nightly cares with daily labours join, 30
If foreign sloth obtain the rich reward,
If Gallia's craft the pond'rous fleece purloin?

Was it for this, by constant vigils worn,
I met the terrors of an early grave?
For this I led 'em from the pointed thorn?
For this I bath'd 'em in the lucid wave? 35

Ah! heedless Albion! too benignly prone
Thy blood to lavish and thy wealth resign!
Shall ev'ry other virtue grace thy throne,
But quick-ey'd Prudence never yet be thine? 40

From the fair natives of this peerless hill
Thou gav'st the sheep that browse Iberian plains
Their plaintive cries the faithless region fill,
Their fleece adorns an haughty foe's domains.

Ill-fated flocks! from cliff to cliff they stray; 45
Far from their dams, their native guardians, far!

Where the soft shepherd, all the livelong day,
Chants his proud mistress to his hoarse guitar.

But Albion's youth her native fleece despise;
Unmov'd they hear the pining shepherd's moan; 50
In silky folds each nervous limb disguise,
Allur'd by ev'ry treasure but their own.

Oh! have I hurry'd down the rocky steep,
Anxious to see the wintry tempest drive;
"Preserve," said I, "preserve your fleece, my Sheep!
Ere long will Phillis, will my love, arrive. 56

Ere long she came: ah! woe is me! she came,
Rob'd in the Gallic loom's extraneous twine;
For gifts like these they give their spotless fame,
Resign their bloom, their innocence resign. 60

Will no bright maid, by worth, by titles, known,
Give the rich growth of British hills to Fame?
And let her charms, and her example, own
That Virtue's dress and Beauty's are the same? 66

Will no fam'd chief support this generous maid?
Once more the patriot's arduous path resume?
And, comely from his native plains array'd,
Speak future glory to the British loom? 70

What pow'r unseen my ravish'd fancy fires?
I pierce the dreary shade of future days;
Sure 'tis the genius of the land inspires,
To breathe my latest breath in * * * praise. 75

O might my breath for * * * praise suffice,
How gently should my dying limbs repose!
O might his future glory bless mine eyes, 75
My ravish'd eyes! how calmly would they close!

* * * was born to spread the gen'ral joy;
By virtue rapt, by party uncontroll'd;
Britons for Britain shall the crook employ;
Britons for Britain's glory shear the fold. 80

E L E G Y XIX,

Written in spring 1743.

A GAIN the lab'ring hind inverts the soil ;
 Again the merchant ploughs the tumid wave ;
 Another spring renews the soldier's toil,
 And finds me vacant in the rural cave.

As the soft lyre display'd my wonted loves, 5
 The pensive pleasure and the tender pain,
 The sordid Alpheus hurry'd thro' my groves,
 Yet stopp'd to vent the dictates of disdain.

He glanc'd contemptuous o'er my ruin'd fold ;
 He blam'd the graces of my fav'rite bow'r ; 10
 My breast, unfully'd by the lust of gold ;
 My time, unlavish'd in pursuit of pow'r.

Yes, Alpheus ! fly the purer paths of Fate ;
 Abjure these scenes, from venal passions free ;
 Know in this grove I vow'd perpetual hate, 15
 War, endless war, with lucre and with thee.

Here, nobly zealous, in my youthful hours
 I dress'd an altar to Thalia's name ;
 Here, as I crown'd the verdant shrine with flow'rs,
 Soft on my labours stole the smiling dame. 20

“ Damon,” she cry'd, if, pleas'd with honest praise,
 “ Thou court success by virtue or by song,
 “ Fly the false dictates of the venal race,
 “ Fly the gross accents of the venal tongue.

“ Swear that no lucre shall thy zeal betray ; 25
 “ Swerve not thy foot with Fortune's vot'ries more ;
 “ Brand thou their lives, and brand their lifeless
 day—”

The winning phantom urg'd me, and I swore:

Forth from the rustic altar swift I stray'd,
 "Aid my firm purpose, ye celestial Pow'rs!" 30
 "Aid me to quell the fordid breast," I said;
 And threw my jav'lin tow'rd's their hostile tow'rs*.

Think not regretful I survey the deed,
 Or added years no more the zeal allow;
 Still, still observant, to the grove I speed, 35
 The shrine embellish, and repeat the vow.

Sworn from his cradle Rome's relentless foe,
 Such gen'rous hate the Punic champion† bore;
 Thy lake, O Thrasimene! beheld it glow,
 And Cannæ's walls and Trebia's crimson shore. 40

But let grave annals paint the warrior's fame;
 Fair shine his arms in history enroll'd;
 Whilst humbler lyres his civil worth proclaim,
 His nobler hate of avarice and gold.—

Now Punic pride its final eve survey'd, 45
 Its hosts exhausted, and its fleets on fire;
 Patient the victor's lurid frown obey'd,
 And saw th' unwilling elephants retire.

Put when their gold depress'd the yielding scale,
 Their gold in pyramdic plenty pil'd, 50
 He saw th' unutterable grief prevail;
 He saw their tears, and in his fury smil'd.

"Think not," he cry'd, "ye view the smiles of
 ease,

Or this firm breast disclaims a patriot's pain;
 I smile, but from a soul estrang'd to peace, 55
 Frantic with grief, delirious with disdain.

But were it cordial, this detested smile,
 Seems it less timely than the grief ye show?
 O Sons of Carthage! grant me to revile
 The fordid source of your indecent woe. 60

* The Roman ceremony in declaring war.

† Hannibal.

Why weep ye now? ye saw with tearless eye
 When your fleet perish'd on the Punic wave;
 Where lurk'd the coward tear, the lazy sigh,
 When Tyre's imperial state commenc'd a slave?
 'Tis past—O Carthage! vanquish'd, honour'd
 shade!

Go, the mean sorrows of thy sons deplore; 66
 Had Freedom shar'd the vow to Fortune paid,
 She ne'er, like Fortune, had forsook thy shore."

He ceas'd—Abash'd the conscious audience hear,
 Their pallid cheeks a crimson blush unfold, 70
 Yet o'er that virtuous blush distreams a tear,
 And falling, moistens their abandon'd gold*. 72

E L E G Y XX.

He compares his humble fortune with the distress
 of others, and his subjection to Delia with the
 miserable servitude of an African slave.

WH Y droops this heart with fancy'd woes
 forlorn?

Why sinks my soul beneath each wintry sky?
 What pensive crowds, by ceaseless labours worn,
 What myriads, wish to be as blest'd as I!

What tho' my roofs devoid of pomp arise, 5
 Nor tempt the proud to quit his destin'd way?
 Nor costly art my flow'ry dales disguise,
 Where only simple Friendship deigns to stray?

See the wild sons of Lapland's chill domain,
 That scoop their couch beneath the drifted snows!
 How void of hope they ken the frozen plain, 11
 Where the sharp east for ever, ever blows!

* By the terms forced upon the Carthaginians
 by Scipio, they were to deliver up all the elephants,
 and to pay near two millions sterling.

Slave tho' I be, to Delia's eyes a slave,
 My Delia's eyes endear the bands I wear;
 The sigh she causes well becomes the brave, 15
 The pang she causes 'tis ev'n bliss to bear.

See the poor native quit the Libyan shores,
 Ah! not in love's delightful fetters bound!
 No radiant smile his dying peace restores,
 Nor love, nor fame, nor friendship, heals his 20
 wound.

Let vacant bards display their boasted woes;
 Shall I the mockery of grief display;
 No; let the Muse his piercing pangs disclose,
 Who bleeds and weeps his sum of life away!

On the wild beach in mournful guise he stood, 25
 Ere the shrill boatswain gave the hated sign;
 He dropp'd a tear unseen into the flood,
 He stole one secret moment to repine.

Yet the Muse listen'd to the plaints he made,
 Such moving plaints as Nature could inspire; 30
 To me the Muse his tender plea convey'd,
 But smooth'd and suited to the sounding lyre.

"Why am I ravish'd from my native strand?
 What savage race protects this impious gain?
 Shall foreign plagues infest this teeming land, 35
 And more than sea-born monsters plough the main?"

Here the dire locusts' horrid swarms prevail;
 Here the blue asps with livid poison swell;
 Here the dry dipsa writhes his sinuous mail;
 Can we not here secure from envy dwell? 40

When the grim lion urg'd his cruel chase,
 When the stern panther sought his midnight prey,
 What fate reserv'd me for this Christian race?
 O race more polish'd, more severe, than they!

* Spoke by a Savage.

Ye prouling Wolves ! pursue my latest cries ; 43
 Thou hungry Tiger ! leave thy reeking den ;
 Ye sandy Wastes ! in rapid eddies rise ;
 O tear me from the whips and scorns of men !

Yet in their face superior beauty glows,
 Are smiles the mien of Rapine and of Wrong ? 50
 Yet from their lip the voice of mercy flows,
 And ev'n religion dwells upon their tongue.

Of blissful haunts they tell, and brighter climes,
 Where gentle minds, convey'd by Death, repair ; 54
 But stain'd with blood, and crimson'd o'er with
 crimes,

Say, shall they merit what they paint so fair ?

No, careless, hopeless of those fertile plains,
 Rich by our toils, and by our sorrows gay,
 They ply our labours and enchain our pains,
 And feign these distant regions to repay. 60

For them our tusked elephant expires ;
 For them we drain the mine's embowell'd gold ;
 Where rove the brutal nation's wild desires ?
 Our limbs are purchas'd and our life is sold !

Yet shores there are, bless'd shores for us remain, 65
 And favour'd isles, with golden fruitage crown'd,
 Where tufted flow'rets paint the verdant plain,
 Where ev'ry breeze shall med'cine ev'ry wound.

There the stern tyrant that embitters life
 Shall, vainly suppliant, spread his asking hand ; 70
 There shall we view the billows' raging strife,
 Aid the kind breast, and waft his boat to land." 72

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E L E G Y XXI.

Taking a view of the country from his retirement, he is led to meditate on the character of the ancient Britons. Written at the time of a rumoured tax upon luxury, 1746.

THUS Damon sung—What tho' unknown to
praise

Umbrageous coverts hide my Muse and me,
Or 'mid the rural shepherds flow my days?
Amid the rural shepherds I am free.

To view sleek vassals crowd a stately hall,
Say, should I grow myself a solemn slave?
To find thy tints, O Titian! grace my wall,
Forego the flow'ry fields my fortune gave?

Lord of my time, my devious path I bend
Thro' fringy woodland or smooth-shaven lawn, 10
Or penfile grove or airy cliff ascend;
And hail the scene by Nature's pencil drawn.

Thanks be to Fate—tho' nor the racy vine,
Nor fatt'ning olive clothe the fields I rove,
Sequester'd shades and gurgling founts are mine, 15
And ev'ry filvan grot the Muses love.

Here if my vesta point the mould'ring pile,
Where hood and cowl Devotion's aspect wore,
I trace the tott'ring reliques with a smile,
To think the mental bondage is no more. 20

Pleas'd if the glowing landscape wave with corn,
Or the tall oaks, my country's bulwark, rise;
Pleas'd if mine eye, o'er thousand vallies borne,
Discern the Cambrian hills support the skies.

And see Plinlimmon! ev'n the youthful sight 25
Scales the proud hill's etherial cliffs with pain!

Such, Caer-Caradoc! thy stupendous height
Whose ample shade obscures th' Iernian main.

Bleak. joyless regions! where, by Science fir'd,
Some prying sage his lonely step may bend;
There by the love of novel plants inspir'd,
Invidious view the clamb'ring goats ascend. 37

Yet for those mountains, clad with lasting snow,
The freeborn Briton left his greenest mead,
Receding fullen from his mightier foe,
For here he saw fair Liberty recede. 38

Then if a chief perform'd a patriot's part,
Sustain'd her drooping sons, repell'd her foes,
Above or Persian luxe or Attic art
The rude majestic monument arose. 40

Progressive ages caroll'd forth his fame,
Sires to his praise attun'd their children's tongue,
The hoary Druid fed the gen'rous flame,
While in such strains the rev'rend wizard sung:

"Go forth my Sons! for what is vital breath, 45
Your gods expell'd, your liberty resign'd?
Go forth, my Sons!—for what is instant death
To souls secure perenial joys to find?

For scenes there are, unknown to war or pain,
Where drops the balm that heals a tyrant's wound;
Where patriots, blest'd with boundless freedom,
reign,

With mistletoe's mysterious garlands crown'd.

Such are the names that grace your mystic songs,
Your solemn woods resound their martial fire;
To you, my Sons! the ritual meed belongs, 55
If in the cause you vanquish or expire.

Hark! from the sacred oak that crowns the groves
What awful voice my raptur'd bosom warms!
This is the favour'd moment Heav'n approves,
Sound the shrill trump; this instant found to arms."

Theirs was the science of a martial race,
To shape the lance or decorate the shield :
Ev'n the fair virgin stain'd her native grace
To give new horrors to the tented field.

Now for some cheek where guilty blushes glow, 65
For some false Florimel's impure disguise,
The list'd youth nor War's loud signal know,
Nor Virtue's call, nor Fame's imperial prize.

Then, if soft concord lull'd their fears to sleep,
Inert and silent slept the manly car, 70
But rush'd horrific o'er the fearful sleep,
If Freedom's awful clarion breath'd to war.

Now the sleek courtier, indolent and vain,
Thron'd in the splendid carriage, glides supine,
To taint his virtue with a foreign strain, 75
Or at a fav'rite's board his faith resign.

Leave then, O Luxury! this happy soil;
Lhase her, Brittania! to some hostile shore;
Or fleece the baneful pest with annual spoil*,
And let thy virtuous offspring weep no more. 80

Alludes to a tax upon luxury, then in debate.



